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MAINE DEFENDERS OF THE FLAG

When a University of Maine-Farmington student arranged U.S. Flags on the floor of a campus hallway to see if others would walk on them or around them, she did not know what to expect. What she got was stern resistance from a determined American Legionnaire, District 4 Commander Charles Bennett, and an Operation Iraqi Freedom veteran, Travis Hill, a member of Farmington Post 28. Bennett stood his ground and blocked students from trampling the flag after he was threatened with arrest. Hill, a student, joined him in protest when he saw what was going on. The display was removed after it was deemed a safety hazard. Bennett and Hill recently received national awards from The American Legion. *See a video of their demonstration at www.legion.org/vision/currentevents/ Click on "Students Trample Old Glory"*

Photo by Brian Wedge

The American Legion Magazine, a leader among national general-interest publications, is published monthly by The American Legion for its 2.7 million members. These wartime veterans, working through 15,000 community-level posts, dedicate themselves to God and Country and traditional American values; strong national security; adequate and compassionate care for veterans, their widows and orphans; community service; and the wholesome development of our nation's youth.



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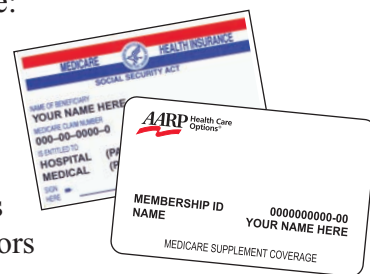
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*Juliette Cubanski, Molly Voris, Michelle Kitchman, Tricia Neuman, Lisa Potetz, & The Kaiser Family Foundation, *Medicare Chartbook*, Third Edition, Summer 2005. <<http://www.kff.org/medicare/7284.cfm>>, (December 6, 2006), p. 32. This is a Solicitation of Insurance.

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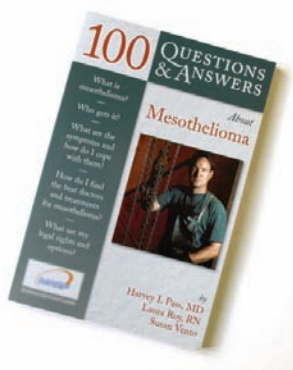


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'Signature Wound of the War'

I am writing to commend *The American Legion Magazine* for exposing the damaging effect that traumatic brain injuries have had on thousands of our military men and women. Your work to bring the signature injury of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan to the forefront in the May 2008 issue will undoubtedly help inspire policymakers and military medical experts to advance better screening, care and services for TBI survivors and their families.

Although there is a long way to go before our soldiers receive all the resources they need, Congress has worked with the military toward a number of important accomplishments, including new mandatory post-deployment brain injury screenings, and approval of legislation that will mandate a study to begin officially tracking the occurrence of combat-related traumatic brain injuries.

When Congress considers reforming military policy and veterans services, it is The American Legion and other veterans advocacy groups who we depend on to speak with the loudest voice. With your commitment to TBI prevention and care, I am confident that a healthier future is in store for America's military men and women.

—U.S. Rep. Bill Pascrell, Jr., D-N.J.

Outstanding job on the traumatic brain injury articles! There is so much to learn from those pages. It will take me several readings to get the full impact of the articles. In addition, your graphics keep getting better and better.

—Bill Beckman, Lake Mills, Wis.

'Rescue in Afghanistan'

Thanks for the great article by Richard Minitier in the May issue: "Rescue in Afghanistan." Danny Dietz, one of the SEALs who died, was honored with the dedication of a bronze statue of him in a park in Littleton, Colo., last July 4. Several thousand people attended, and Donald C. Winter, Secretary of the Navy, was the main speaker.

Also, the Navy recently announced that a guided missile destroyer, the DDG-112, will be named in honor of Lt. Michael Murphy, leader of SEAL Team 10, who received the Medal of Honor posthumously.

—Danny Casey, Arvada, Colo.

I read the story of the Navy SEALs in Afghanistan with admiration and respect for these true patriots who gave so much for us. There was another patriot who died that day. Maj. Steve Reich (U.S. Military Academy, Class of '93) was the Special Forces pilot who was flying the helicopter that was blown out of the sky. Steve was a classmate of my son at West Point, and I had spent many hours with him. He was truly a great man. Steve had been recently married and gave up a baseball career to serve his country.

—Charley McIntyre, Summerfield, Fla.

As a retired Special Operations operator, I appreciated Richard Minitier's story, "Rescue in Afghanistan." However, I was dismayed that, although the story details the far greater heroics of the team's leader, Dan Dietz, and the equally determined heroism of the team's sniper, Matthew Axel-



son, it is the lone officer on the mission who receives the Medal of Honor. The enlisted are given a lesser award.

– Jim Truemper, Merrill, Iowa

‘The Shady Bunch’

The article titled “The Shady Bunch,” (May, Rapid Fire) written by James V. Carroll, was great. Those girls are awesome. I’m sure there are many other wonderful children and parents in the world today, and it would be great if the media would at least give some of these good stories along with the bad.

– Edna Fisher, Lake Wales, Fla.

‘A Fight Nearly Forgotten’

I found Mike Coppock’s article, “A Fight Nearly Forgotten,” (May) to be extremely interesting. However, there is one error. He states that there are no monuments or memorials to U.S. soldiers who fought in Russia.

The state of Michigan has a memorial, located in White Chapel Memorial Park Cemetery in Troy, Mich., that honors the men from Michigan who fought in northern Russia. The 339th Infantry Regiment with the 1st Battalion of the 310th Engineers and the 337th Ambulance and Hospital Companies arrived in Archangel, Russia, on Sept. 4, 1918.

About 75 percent of the 5,500 troops who made up the North Russian Expeditionary Force were from Michigan. They called themselves “Polar Bears.” Ninety-four of them were killed in action. In 1929, five former “Polar Bears” of the 339th Infantry Regiment returned to

North Russia in an attempt to recover the bodies of fellow soldiers who had been killed in action or died of exposure 10 years earlier. They recovered 86 bodies. Fifty-six of these were buried around the memorial site on May 30, 1930.

– Skip Bushart, Waterford, Mich.

I served with the 1/31 Infantry of the 7th ID on the DMZ in Korea from 1968-69, and I found the article about the 31st and 27th Infantry Regiments intriguing. The 31st Infantry adopted a silver polar bear with the inscription PRO PATRIA as its insignia to commemorate its Siberian service. I wore this insignia proudly at the time, and presently the soldiers of the 4/31st Infantry of the 10th Mountain Division proudly wear it. I feel that the polar bear crest is an appropriate living memorial to these fine men who served this country in the extreme conditions of Siberia.

Elements of the 4/31st Infantry within the 10th Mountain saw service in Iraq and Afghanistan, and it’s the only active battalion of the 31st Infantry on duty in the Army today.

– Gary A. Collier, Brooklyn, N.Y.

In his article, Mike Coppock misidentified the U.S. military units. The two Army units sent to Siberia in 1918 were not a “division,” but rather the 27th Infantry Regiment (the “Wolfhounds”) and the 31st Infantry Regiment (the “Polar Bears.”)

– Jim Pitts, Jackson, Miss.

‘Why Veterans Unite’

I thought you would be interested giving credit to the author of your boxed statement on page 54 of the May issue.

It comes from Michael Norman’s book “These Good Men,” a Vietnam memoir written 16 years after his return from combat. The book was an attempt to reunite with men of his former platoon, which led to a renewal of the bonds of comradeship. I cannot think of a better expression of why old comrades find each other’s company so comforting and cathartic. It also helps me explain why, 40 years later, I still find that visits with my former company commander and lead scout are a special time of reflection and comfort.

– Tom Manson, Chesterfield, Va.

‘Our Other Immigration Problem’

To demand identification from everyone who fits a profile would be to trample on the rights of those here legally, not to mention the fact that not all illegals are Hispanic; indeed, our experience with foreign terrorists who entered this country illegally would suggest otherwise. The first paragraph (June) acknowledges this dilemma but then avoids it.

– Dr. Merton L. Bland, Arlington, Va.

Correction: In a photo caption accompanying the article “The Safety Net” (June), an incorrect date was listed. The photo was taken between 1918 and 1920.

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The value of volunteering

Fred Zamora can't fight the emotions that rise to the surface when he talks about volunteering at a Department of Veterans Affairs medical facility. Though he has a wife, grandchildren and hobbies to occupy much of his time, Zamora has still managed to spend 27 years helping out his fellow veterans.

"Some of these guys, no one ever comes to see them," said Zamora, his voice choked with emotion. "This is very special to me. When I came back from Korea and Vietnam, no one was there for me. I want to make sure that doesn't happen to these guys."

Zamora, a member of Post 205 in Augusta, Ga., volunteers at the Charlie Norwood VA Medical Center, and the Georgia War Veterans Nursing Home. He helps organize bingo parties a couple times a month that include food and drinks. During holiday programs at the medical center, he and fellow Legionnaires serve dinner, sometimes feeding up to 500 people. And that's just part of what he does *every* month.

Volunteers such as Zamora are critical to VA, in both man hours and cost savings. Last year, more than 12 million voluntary hours provided VA with services that would normally total (based on an independent-sector volunteer rate of \$18.77 an hour) nearly \$244 million. That number is staggering.

So, too, are the numbers that Legionnaires contributed to volunteer work in fiscal 2007: more than 7,500 Legionnaires donated 909,137 hours of their time at 167 VA facilities – that's worth \$1.7 billion.

Legionnaires volunteer at VA medical centers, community-based outpatient clinics, Vet Centers, nursing homes, state veterans homes, and many other locations in support of hospitalized veterans. The Legion's Veterans Affairs Volunteer Services representatives attend quarterly hospital meetings, coordinating volunteer and donation needs with local Legion posts.

There is no shortage of ways to help. In VA hospitals and polytrauma centers, volunteers provide administrative support, escort patients, work in the food court, serve coffee, staff the information desk and drive shuttles. Anyone can volunteer; individuals and posts can contact the chief of volunteer service at the local VA medical center to arrange for an initial screening and to choose the right volunteer program. You can volunteer 20 hours a week, or you can put in a couple afternoons a month.

It really doesn't matter in what way or how often you volunteer. What matters is that you *do* volunteer. Who better to work with men and women receiving care in VA hospitals than men and women who also served their country? The common bond of military service, from World War II to the men and women fighting the global war on terrorism, connects those who were able to leave the service relatively unscathed to those who suffered life-altering injuries, either physical or psychological.

Our volunteerism saves VA millions of dollars each year. But you can't put a price on what it does for patients, especially the veterans no one else ever comes to see.




National Commander
Marty Conatser

MEMORANDA

HOW YOU CAN VOLUNTEER:

For information concerning individual or post volunteer opportunities, contact the Chief of Voluntary Service at your nearest VA medical center. They will arrange an initial screening and help you choose the program that best meets your availability and interests. Information is also available on the Internet.

www.va.gov/volunteer

LEGACY RUN TO PHOENIX:

The 2008 American Legion Legacy Run is scheduled to depart from Indianapolis on Aug. 17 and arrive in Phoenix, the site of the 90th National Convention, on Aug. 21. The goal is to raise \$350,000 for The American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund.

Pre-registration is \$35 before Aug. 1 for each operator or supporter. Volunteers, Legion posts and other supporters are encouraged to register for \$35, in exchange for a full registration kit and patch set. Passengers may also register at the reduced rate of \$15 before Aug. 1 and receive the patch set and other material. Registrations postmarked after Aug. 1 are \$45 for both operators and passengers alike.

www.legion.org/programs/legacyrun/overview

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House energy conservation bill



SUPPORT

Rep. Joe Sestak, D-Pa.

Sestak, now serving his first House term, is a retired Navy vice admiral.

With the price of oil exceeding \$130 a barrel, and the price of gasoline more than \$4 a gallon, U.S. consumers are feeling the impact of rising prices while our economy faces a burgeoning energy crisis. Our dependence on foreign oil is not only detrimental to our economy, environment and health, but also negatively impacts our national security.

Our dependence on foreign oil funds unstable regions and countries whose governments are not accountable to their citizens, or the international community, for their actions. This dependence limits U.S. foreign policy and hampers our ability to confront oil-producing countries with elements that seek to harm the United States. Claiming our energy independence is critical to ensuring national security.

This winter, Congress voted on – and the president signed into law – H.R. 6, or the Energy Efficiency Act of 2007, which raised corporate average fuel economy (CAFE) standards to 35 miles per gallon. But many critical provisions were left out of the bill.

To fill the gaps of H.R. 6, we must enact the Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation Act of 2008 (H.R. 5351). The legislation provides long-term incentives to expand production of home-grown fuels, encourages manufacturers to build more efficient appliances, supports the use of renewable energy, helps working families purchase energy-efficient appliances, and provides energy production tax credits for the use of solar panels, small wind turbines and geothermal heat pumps. Finally, H.R. 5351 closes tax loopholes that allow big oil companies to minimize their tax bills.

In sum, this bill will decrease our dependence on foreign oil and bolster our national security.



OPPOSE

Rep. Wally Herger, R-Calif.

Herger serves on the House Ways and Means Committee.

I believe the Democratic majority in Washington is taking us down the wrong path with its new energy bill, H.R. 5351, which proposes to increase taxes on U.S. energy producers. This would drive up production costs, discourage

development of domestic supplies, and make it tougher for U.S. producers to compete with their foreign counterparts. Making it more expensive to produce domestic energy would also drive good energy-sector jobs abroad.

We cannot tax our way to energy independence. Rather, Congress must take action to increase U.S.-made energy. I have always supported expanding the diversity of our domestic energy supplies through incentives for renewable energy resources, which H.R. 5351 does to an extent. But it will take time for forest biomass, wind, geothermal and solar energies to become fully viable.

In the meantime, the United States must pursue a balanced approach by responsibly developing petroleum and natural gas resources, as well as advanced coal and nuclear technologies. Our nation has a rich supply of untapped resources, including those in Alaska and off our Atlantic and Pacific coasts. By using superior technology, we can exploit energy resources in a more efficient and environmentally safe way. Energy security and environmental protection need not be an either/or proposition.

In short, becoming more energy-independent by increasing U.S.-produced resources is critical to stabilizing energy prices at home. The Democratic majority's legislation would actually do the opposite. We won't get more of something by taxing it. We'll get less energy and higher prices at the pump.

THE HEART OF THE ISSUE

The Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation Act of 2008 promotes energy efficiency and greater use of renewable resources. Critics say the bill will raise taxes on U.S. energy producers and drive up production costs.

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DAMNED

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Too costly to repair and hard to remove,
America's 80,000 dams just keep getting older.

BY KEN OLSEN

Hours after an Atlantic storm system began pummeling New England in October 2005, the reservoir behind Lake Wyola Dam in northwestern Massachusetts started rising fast. A worried dam keeper, who had drained water from the lake in anticipation of the deluge, monitored the 122-year-old structure throughout the night, regularly updating local emergency-management officials. The earthen and stone dam holding back the swelling reservoir had no emergency spillway. If floodwaters breached the top, it could easily collapse, sending a 12-foot wall of water surging through the towns of Leverett and Shutesbury.

The rain persisted. By 2 a.m., the water drew within an inch of the dam's top.

A quarter-mile downstream, Kenyon Fairey and her family slept through what they assumed was just another fall rainstorm. Like more than 70 homeowners living in the dam's flood zone, she was completely unaware of the peril.

One hundred miles to the southeast, officials in Taunton, Mass., scrambled to evacuate 2,000 people as a 173-year-old dam upstream from the town threatened to rupture from the same foul weather.

Ultimately, both communities were spared. Although more than 100 dams across New England were overtopped, breached or otherwise damaged that stormy weekend, the dams threatening Leverett, Shutesbury and Taunton remained intact. No lives were lost. Six months later, another spring storm flooded New England and broke through another 300 or so dams. Again, miraculously, no one was killed.

These near-catastrophes illustrate a deadly threat tucked in the backwoods of America's aging infrastructure. More than 11,000 high-hazard dams in the United States, many of them rarely inspected and poorly main-



Survivors stand by the remains of their homes, which were destroyed when the South Fork Dam collapsed in Johnstown, Pa., on May 31, 1889. AP

tained, have the potential to injure or kill thousands. As alarming as the Interstate 35 West bridge collapse was in Minneapolis last August, the American Society of Civil Engineers gives better ratings to bridges than dams on its Report Card for America's Infrastructure. Bridges earn a grade of "C." The nation's dams consistently rate a "D."

The news gets worse. More than half of the high-hazard dams lack emergency evacuation plans, much less maps showing the areas that would be inundated if a dam were breached. Most people have no idea they live in the path of the torrent a failing dam would unleash. Moreover, the nation's dams need more than \$40 billion in repairs, and there's not nearly enough money to start fixing them.

"We started building dams as soon as we got off the *Mayflower*," says Laura Wildman, a civil engineer at American Rivers, a non-profit organization that focuses on healthy streams in the nation. "But we didn't come up with a system for dealing with dams in a country that is this big, this developed and this complex. As a result, no one thinks they are responsible for letting the people below a dam know they are at risk. So the job goes undone and countless millions live below dams – often crumbling – without a clue,



On March 14, 2006, an earthen dam breached at the Ka Loko Reservoir in Lihue, Hawaii. Seven people died when more than 300 million gallons of water cut a three-mile path of destruction to the sea. The breach created a wall of water at least 20 feet high and 200 feet wide. AP

until they see a large wall of water approaching their home.”

The United States has a considerable history of fatal dam and levee failures. The most tragic is the collapse of the South Fork Dam that killed 2,209 people in Johnstown, Pa., in 1889. Serious flooding again visited havoc on the community in the 1930s. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was summoned to perform flood-control work.

“Afterward, the Corps of Engineers identified the community as flood-free,” says Larry Larson, executive director of the Association of State Flood Plain Managers. Two more dam failures killed 45 people in the Johnstown area in July 1977, and changed the way the Corps works, Larson adds. It no longer tells communities that flood-control measures, such as dams and levees, eliminate flood risk.

Almost every region has suffered. Between 450 and 600 people died from the 1928 St. Francis Dam failure in California, leading the state to start a dam-safety program. The National Dam Inspection Act was passed in 1972 after debacles in West Virginia and South Dakota killed 363 people. But Congress didn’t fund the program until a fatal dam disaster in Georgia in 1977 prompted President Jimmy Carter to intervene.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers finally inspected some 9,000 non-federal dams in the late 1970s and early 1980s and rated about 2,900 of them as unsafe. It turned that information over to the states, which were responsible for making sure dam owners (mostly private individuals or companies) made necessary repairs. The inspection program soon faded, likely because of political pressure, a former Corps of Engineers official says.

“The governors were getting a list of dams every 30 days that they should take care of,” says Charles Karpowicz, who performed dam safety work for the National Park Service and the Corps of Engineers. “In my experience, upper management – in this case, chief state executives – doesn’t like getting lists of things that are unsafe and need to be dealt with immediately. It can take money away from (other) priorities.”

More federal legislation followed, including the 1996 National Dam Safety Act. Another 140 dams have collapsed in the 12 years since its passage, including the Ka Loko Dam failure in Hawaii in March 2006 that killed seven people and caused more than \$50 million in damages.

“The Dam Safety Act hasn’t made the nation’s dams safer,” Larson says. “It’s a

pretty minor program that has provided state legislatures with an excuse not to fund state dam-safety programs, by creating this false notion that the federal government has that covered.”

State and federal officials say they need at least \$40 billion to repair the nation’s dams. Some \$10 billion alone is needed for the most critical dams, the failure of which threatens human life. At best, Congress may provide \$200 million over the next five years to begin a fraction of that work. That’s paltry compared to money the federal government spends to rehabilitate roads and bridges. Why the discrepancy? Lack of visibility. No one drives a dam to work.

In addition, there are government agencies dedicated to highways and bridges. The majority of dams, by contrast, are privately owned. And some 3,700 dams have no known owner – no one to hold responsible for keeping them safe.

Every state except Alabama has a dam-safety program that is supposed to oversee private and municipal dams. The majority of the dams under the states’ jurisdiction aren’t even inspected, because state programs are under-funded and under-staffed. For example, Texas has seven engineers to keep watch over 7,400 dams. Oregon has two engineers to track 1,200 dams, according to the Association of State Dam Safety Officials. These estimates are conservative, considering there’s no accurate tally of the nation’s dams and, therefore, no way to know the total number of unsafe structures.

“Even federal agencies haven’t been maintaining their dams appropriately,” says Stephanie Lindloff of American Rivers. “We’re learning that some federally owned dams are in need of extensive repair.” Federal dams are some of the nation’s largest and have the potential to do the most damage.

The Corps of Engineers, which operates 610 dams, screened 200 of its highest-risk structures over the past three years as part of its “risk-informed” safety program. The agency identified six flood-control dams that urgently need work because they are critically close to failing, even under normal operations, and pose a threat to human life. These include the Center Hill Dam in Tennessee and the Wolf

Creek Dam in Kentucky, either of which could flood Nashville, and are leaking because they are anchored in eroding limestone. Four navigation dams also made the Corps’ most hazardous list, including the massive John Day Dam on the Columbia River along the Washington-Oregon state line, which needs as much as \$1 billion in repairs.

Another group of Corps dams are classified as “unsafe or potentially unsafe.” The list includes Dworshak Dam in northern Idaho, one of the tallest concrete dams in North America, which is leaking around the joints and foundation.

“Many of the dams in the Corps portfolio are more than 50 years old,” says Eric Halpin, special assistant for dam and levee safety at the Corps of Engineers. “Materials and structures degrade over time. The bill is coming due.” The costs of not addressing such problems are massive. “The consequences of the New Orleans levee failures totals between \$100 billion and \$200 billion,”



Halpin says. “What Hurricane Katrina informed the nation is, we can’t afford not to do it.”

Maintenance and safety are not the only issues. Housing developments constructed downstream from dams, or too close to inadequate levees, are known as “hazard creep,” and it’s usually caused by a lack of awareness of dams upstream, or the assumption that they are built to withstand anything forever.

“Hazard creep is especially common in densely populated areas like the Northeast,” Wildman says. California alone requires that real-estate buyers be informed when they are acquiring property down-river from a dam. That should become a national mandate, she says.

Likewise, dam owners should be informed when a development is proposed downstream, because it potentially changes the dam’s hazard classification from low or moderate to high. That means the dam must meet more stringent safety requirements, including possession of a larger emergency spillway and

the capability to handle a more significant flood – extremely costly improvements.

“We need to incorporate the long-term costs of maintaining our infrastructure in our planning process, so we’re prepared when the time comes to make repairs,” Lindloff says. “If there’s enough interest in building a piece of infrastructure, you would think there would be enough interest in maintaining its safety and structural integrity.”

One solution often suggested is the removal of old dams built a century or more ago to provide power for sawmills, grist mills, textile mills and defunct factories. Proponents of dam removal argue that the cost of repairs and safety upgrades far exceed the economic benefits an older dam provides, and that equally important economic benefits can be derived from unobstructed runs of herring, salmon, shad and other fish. Such was the argument when Edwards Dam in Maine was removed in 1999. Pennsylvania is a leader in this effort, funding the removal of more than 30 small dams a year.

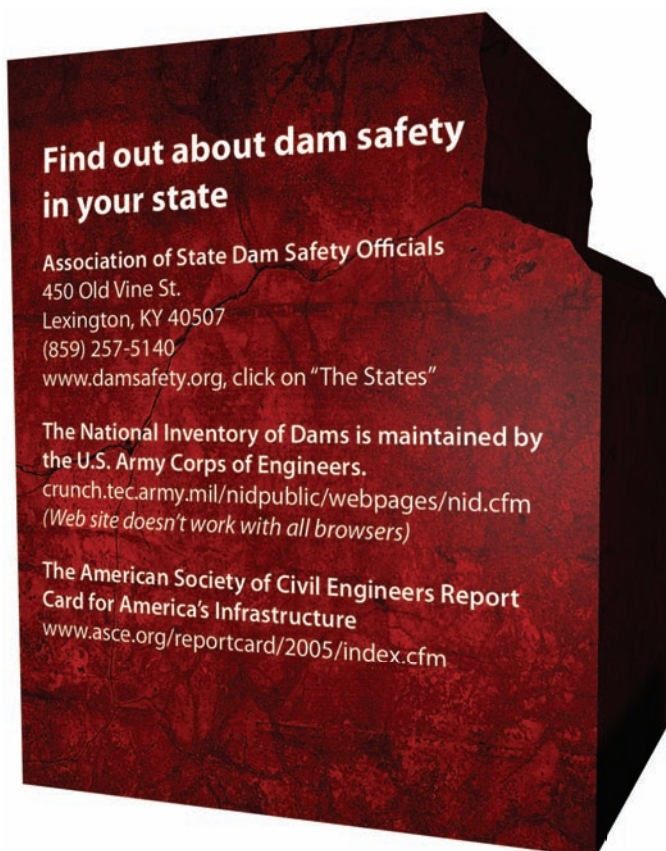
But that takes money. In the meantime, public awareness of dam conditions, locations and their place on the “hazard” hierarchy is a tool with more impact.

Congress is considering legislation that requires “any area that could be inundated as a result of the failure of a levee, dam or other manmade structure” be added to the flood-plain maps produced by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

“Let’s be honest – there’s never going to be enough money to fix all of the dams,” says James Demby, a civil engineer in FEMA’s dam-safety program. So what can we do to reduce the risk to people living in the dam-breach inundation zone? “We can have a really aggressive public outreach and public information strategy to educate people, and give them the knowledge and awareness, so they can take action to minimize their personal loss.”

That appeals to Kenyon Fairey, who had no idea as she slept, that storm waters came within an inch of spilling over the Lake Wyola Dam. It was an entire year before she and her family learned of their peril on that storm-tossed night in Massachusetts. 🌿

Ken Olsen is a freelance writer living in Oregon.



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Behind the Stripes

The senior NCO perspective from Baghdad.

BY RALPH PETERS

Anyone who has served as both a non-commissioned officer and an officer understands the difference in perspectives. One vantage point isn't more valid than the other; the world is just seen through different lenses. Usually, the officer gives us the panoramic view, while the sergeant gives us the close-up – including devilish details that make the difference between tactical success and failure. Sometimes, not least in counter-insurgency warfare, such details are crucial to understanding the “big picture.”

We frequently hear the views of officers, especially senior ones, while the street-level reality of the sergeant's fight gets far less attention from the media, or the military itself. Those who never wore stripes on their sleeves assume that even senior NCOs don't have an adequate perspective. Yet today's NCOs are the best-educated and most articulate we've ever had; they're clear-eyed about the mission and its challenges. But all too often, those with stars on their shoulders fail to grasp the reality where national policy translates into the number of ammo magazines a soldier carries on patrol.

Another thing we tend to get from tactical level NCOs is honesty. During field interviews, I've frequently sensed that officers are calculating how much of the truth to tell me. NCOs try to tell the truth as frankly as they can. Neither the NCOs nor the officers always get it right, but a system that only registers the views of commissioned officers ignores its primary source of battlefield knowledge.

In an online interview with three senior NCOs serving at the battalion and brigade levels in Baghdad last winter, a blunt picture emerged of where we were in Iraq at that point and where we were heading. First Sgt. Todd “Ranger” Hood of the Delta Destroyers, 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, responded to questions as he prepared to re-deploy back to the United States with his unit. First Sgt. Travis Wewers had B Company (“Barracudas”) of the Special Troops Battalion, 4th (“Dragon”) Brigade of the 1st Infantry Division, while Master Sgt. Michael W. Clauss served as the intelligence NCOIC of the same brigade. By the time this article went to press, Wewers and Clauss had swapped duty positions.



Q: *Last year was one of impressive progress in the Dragon Brigade sector of Baghdad. Where were we entering 2008?*

Hood: We're on the road to stability and prosperity, but we're not there yet. Al Dora has been one of the toughest areas in Iraq. Destroyer Company operated in the northern mahallas, the neighborhoods viewed as the retreat and sanctuary areas for the anti-coalition forces. We had to have a more intel-driven operation throughout our time on the ground, and our focus on the use of multiple sources paid off for us. We created a network of dependable local informants who want to see their area come out of the ashes.

Each mahalla has a personality of its own, and I can only speak for

the several my company was responsible for, but enough locals presented themselves to us from the beginning to help the chain reaction that drove the anti-coalition forces, mostly al-Qaeda in Iraq, out of their neighborhoods, and to take back their lives from the terrorists and criminals. They figured out that if they gave us the information we needed, we'd do the dirty work of cleaning up their neighborhoods.

Clauss: We're at a delicate juncture. Combat operations have the enemy back on his heels. The Iraqi citizens are throwing off the yoke of al-Qaeda and the militias. (Iraqis) are tired of the violence, while the sectarian situation has them re-evaluating where they're headed. Some groups are still struggling to carry on the fight to drive U.S. forces from Iraq or just to maintain their own relevancy. We've given the Iraqis a period of low violence to try to bring it together.

Wewers: I see us being at the midway point of the over-arching effort. There are far too many feelings hurt here. If you make a decision that helps one party and act on it, someone else gets upset. All areas of our sector are getting better, though

some are slower to recover than others. One area might be all painted and spackled up, while another's still comprised of run-down houses, or mud huts with packs of dogs running everywhere. I have seen a significant change for the better, though.

Q: *What remains to be done? What's the most challenging part of the mission now?*

Wewers: Our end-state goal is a unified Iraq, with Iraqis governing themselves and providing their own security across the country. We've come a long way, from daily rocket attacks and murders to relative peace in the streets, shops opening and people buying things such as cell phones, which had been forbidden by the insurgents.

What remains to be done is the collective piece that will enable this government to see through internal differences and work together for a common Iraq. Until they all come together behind a unified Iraq, long-term security and stability are nothing more than pipe dreams. The most challenging part is getting the separate factions to work together.

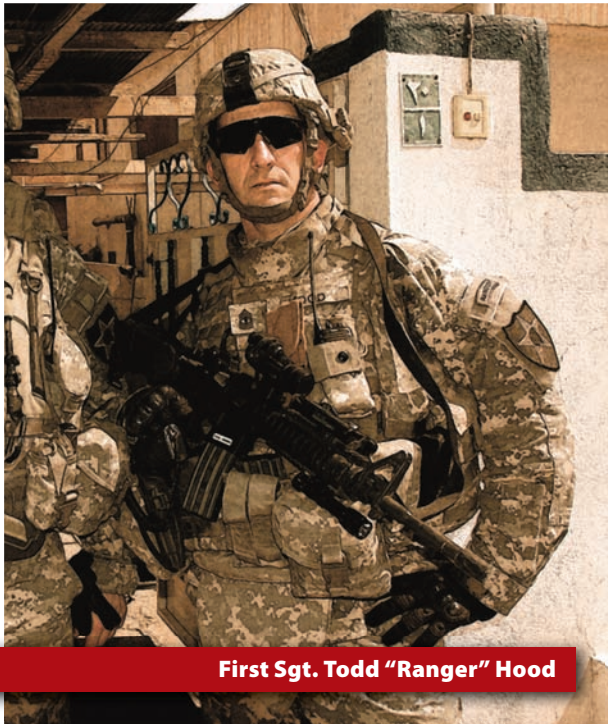
Hood: We're moving toward a more capable Iraqi army and police force, but improved security alone isn't the answer. Iraqis have to work together for the common good. Having seen how well it worked for us, I'm sold on a neighborhood-watch program that puts the locals in charge. We're at a very fragile time right now and must capitalize on the positive momentum.

Clauss: We have Iraqi cooperation with us, but they're enjoying only limited cooperation with each other. The challenge is fostering that interaction, working towards cooperation. They lack trust in the government, in the police and in each other. The Iraqis will do fine once they decide they're for Iraq, instead of a sect or militia.

Q: *What's the toughest thing for our soldiers when dealing with the Iraqis we're trying to help?*

Wewers: The toughest thing I've seen is the uncertainty of who's actually for us or against us. Previously, it was one person shaking our hand and then working a plot to hurt us. Of course, not all Iraqis are bad people – 99 percent of them want to succeed, to have a unified Iraq able to stand on its own. That other 1 percent is what keeps us here.

Hood: The biggest task we faced was finding the right locals for the job of weeding out the bad ones who had a questionable past and were actively working against us. Clarifying the role the local



First Sgt. Todd "Ranger" Hood

people play in the policing of their own mahallas will remain a huge task for the incoming unit.

Clauss: Seeing what some Iraqis do to each other, it's hard to keep soldiers from getting jaded. Most Iraqis are just trying to survive in their culture and do the best they can for their families. But there are enough of them who are criminals, thugs and tyrants. It's critical to keep our soldiers from generalizing that all Iraqis are bad.

Q: *How has your interaction with the Iraqi people developed? With the Iraqi army? The police?*

Clauss: Being out there in the community helps. It fosters a relationship between the platoon leader or company commander and the locals, so they really have a feel for the neighborhood. The Iraqi army has been a positive, stabilizing factor in the streets; after U.S. forces, Iraqis prefer to have Iraqi army units providing security. Some of those units, such as the one we have with us in Saydiyah, are professional and don't display sectarian tendencies. The police, though, and particularly the national police, are a mixed bag. The level of professionalism varies. Some of the national police units are good, while others turn a blind eye to sectarian violence or even facilitate it.

Q: *What lessons do we need to take with us into the Army of tomorrow?*

Clauss: Mass. Overwhelm the enemy. That's one of

the reasons the surge is having success. Also, counterinsurgency and urban warfare are in our future. I've been saying that since Somalia. So train and prepare for it.

My time in Baghdad has been similar to Somalia. The main difference I see is that, in Somalia, the fighting was along tribal lines, while in Iraq, it's along religious and sometimes ethnic lines.

Q: *What's your top-sergeant's view of today's men and women in uniform?*

Hood: Today, soldiers are hardened from so much combat time. I've become a different, more adaptive soldier in the past four years than in the previous 12 I served. There are many soldiers with three combat tours right now who are just on their first or second enlistments. An Army at war creates a different type of soldier. I'm speaking for the infantrymen I lead, but the observation applies to all specialties.

When they say there are no front lines in Iraq, it's no lie. The rocket attacks on forward operating bases and the improvised explosive device (IED) threats are with us always. My soldiers have done eight-hour combat patrols every day for 15 months. I cannot express how difficult a feat that is. Yet they find their battle rhythm and just do it, day in and day out. They eat, sleep, breathe combat patrols and, if they're not on patrol, they're preparing their equipment for the next mission. It's a continuous process. I can't say enough about these great Americans.

Clauss: Every senior officer and NCO in the Army talks about how different it was when they first came in. Our soldiers today are amazing. The American people would be amazed to see the level of responsibility we place in the hands of these young men and women in uniform.

Wewers: The NCOs and soldiers I've had the pleasure of leading over the past year have been outstanding. My company consists of Common Ground Station operators, electronic-repair techs, Signals Intelligence operators, HUMINT personnel, UAV operators and others. While deployed, they've exceeded all my expectations. Every day, these soldiers just continue to work with little or no recognition – not anyone's fault, it just happens – only to get up and do it again the next day. And we've suffered losses, including one fatality in October. Still, the soldiers wake up ready to go. Truly remarkable.

(At this point in the discussion, Hood broke off to re-deploy.)

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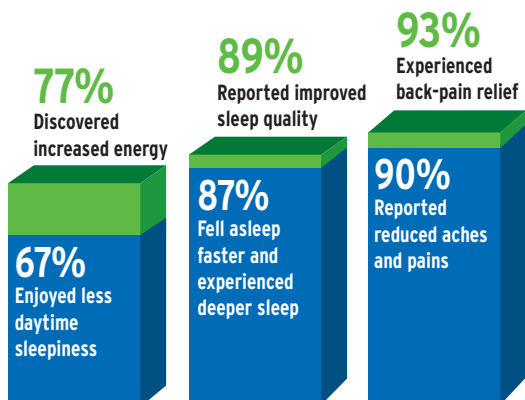


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Q: *How about our battlefield equipment? What really works? What doesn't? What do we have that we don't need, and what do we need that we don't have?*

Wewers: This one's hard, because I don't want to give away any classified information, but our battlefield equipment is better than it's ever been. From the new body armor to the enhanced optics and weapons systems in place, we're truly a force to be reckoned with, even in stability and support operations. I do feel, however, that the quality of the soldier, with the understanding of the terrain and the environment that he's developed, also makes the equipment that much better.

Yeah, we could all use lighter body armor that's quicker to get on and off, especially in the summer heat over here, but the main need now is just getting the knowledge we have into the hands of our junior soldiers and those returning for future tours.

Clauss: Without a peer competitor at the moment, we have to prepare for more urban and counterinsurgency warfare. The tricky part is remaining tactically savvy for a conventional battlefield as well. We need systems that span the full spectrum of warfare.

Re-setting for the next conflict is a tough call. We're notorious for preparing for the last fight. We've become reliant on high-tech equipment that provides us with an edge; sometimes we're over-reliant on it. The main weapon system we need to invest in is our soldiers. That's the most adaptable and flexible weapon system we have. All the high-tech toys can't compete with our real smart-weapon: the soldier. Nothing replaces the soldier with the right know-how making good decisions when it counts. Give soldiers all the training they can handle.

Q: *Contractors on the battlefield are controversial, to say the least. Given your experience in Iraq, what are we getting right about contractor support, and what have we gotten wrong?*

Wewers: Contractors are fantastic for such things as the dining facility and laundry operations, as well as MWR support. I've met some combat-support contractors willing to bend over backwards to help. There are, however, others who either are ignorant of the fact that we're in a war, or who just refuse to see that they could support us better. I'm referring to those contractors who refuse to travel from site to site to serve us more effectively. They just make our lives harder by making us conduct convoys, arrange billeting and classroom space just so they don't have to leave the confines of their comfortable



locations. I, too, wish I could stay in one place and have everyone come to me, but, hey, aren't they hired to support me, not the other way around?

Overall, KBR got a big thumbs up from me, but when you start talking about the contractors who are "attached" in order to help us, we're better off doing it ourselves. At least that way, we know we'll be able to do it on our schedule, not on the contractor's.

Clauss: Contractors are a mixed blessing. They do free up soldiers for other missions; however, contractors pose a retention issue. I've heard from specialists and young sergeants any number of times that they intend to leave military service to become a contractor. They figure that, if they're going to deploy anyway, do it as a contractor and make significantly more money.

Contractors providing life-support services, such as food services, free up soldiers for more critical missions. However, I'm deeply concerned about fielding systems for our soldiers that can operate only with contractor support. 🌿

Ralph Peters is a former Army noncommissioned officer and a retired officer, who currently works as a journalist, military analyst and novelist. His most recent book is "Wars of Blood and Faith: The Conflicts That Will Shape the 21st Century" (Stackpole Books, 2007).

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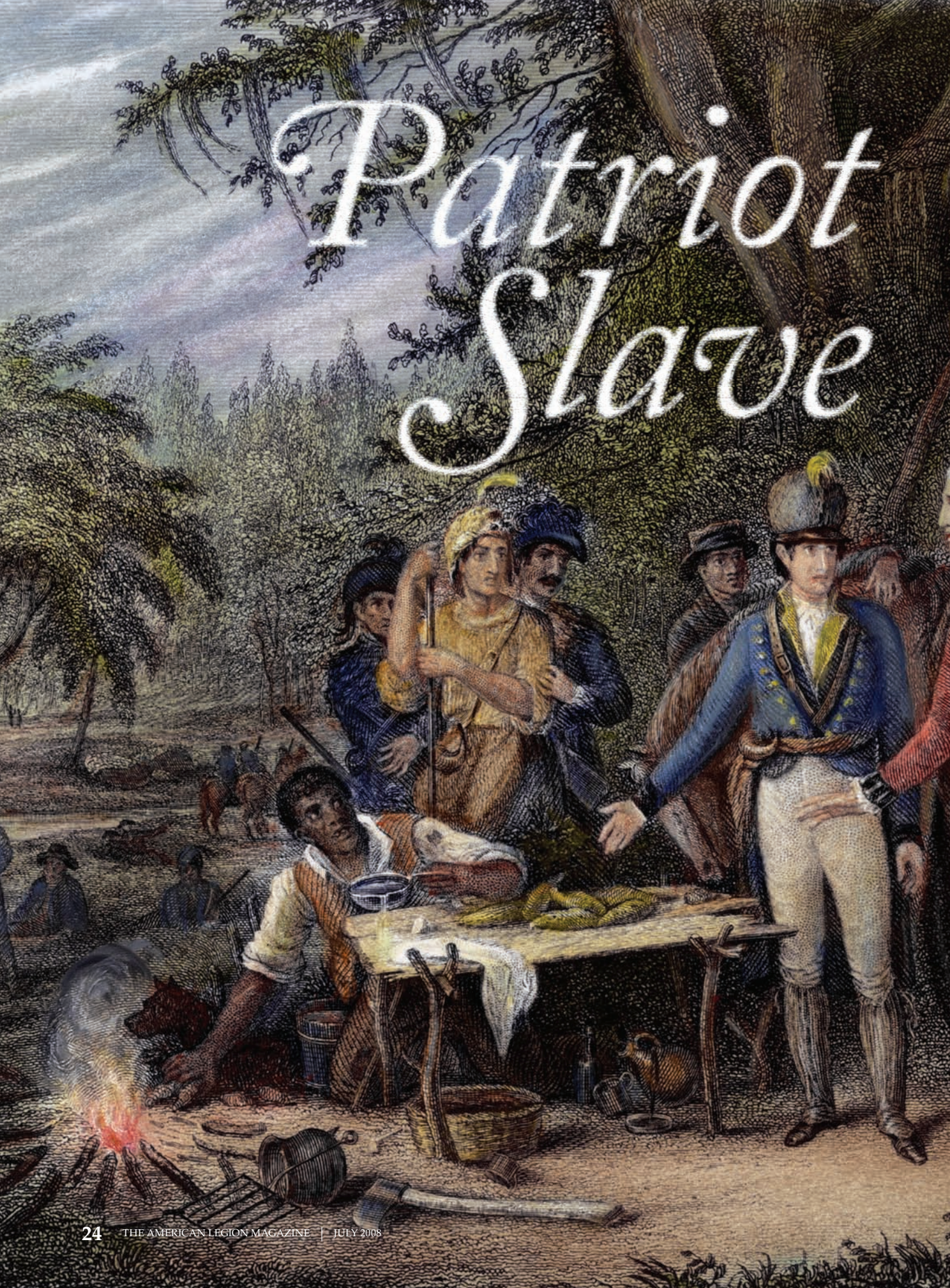
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Patriot Slave





After finding a little-known Revolutionary War hero in her family tree, a genealogical researcher wants to restore his legacy.

BY TINA C. JONES

Legend has it that Oscar and Francis Marion grew up on the same plantation in Berkeley County, S.C., and that they played together as childhood friends in the 1730s. Francis Marion's family owned the plantation. Oscar was a slave. They were probably about the same age, or at least of the same generation. In time, these childhood playmates would mature and, as adults, find fame as patriotic heroes and fierce guerrilla fighters in the Revolutionary War. Francis Marion grew up to become the wily general known to his enemies as the "Swamp Fox." Oscar Marion's place fighting alongside him has only recently come into full focus, although his role in the war has often been portrayed in art and literature over the past two centuries.

Oscar Marion served in the 2nd Continental Army Regiment of South Carolina during the struggle for American independence. His volunteer service of seven years far exceeded the average enlisted soldier's time on duty, and his combat experience was intense; he was described at the time as a "loyal (and) faithful servant" to Gen. Francis Marion. Despite the social injustices he endured during a lifetime spent as a slave and servant, Oscar was one of the most notable and best known among "Marion's Men," having served as the general's personal assistant, sous chef, bugler, oarsman and, of course, fighter. The slave-turned-soldier waged successful guerrilla warfare against British troops, and unlike other slaves owned by Francis Marion's family, who left and served with the loyalists, Oscar deliberately chose the path of patriotism.

I have a personal interest in the life and legacy of Oscar Marion. Over the past 15 years, I have engaged in genealogical research documenting my lineage and family's roots back to the Revolution and beyond. Using primary and secondary sources alike, along with the excellent memory of my mother, Mrs. Tiney R. Haynie, I have discovered fascinating information about the lives of my African-American ancestors and their extended families, as well as their contributions to U.S. history.

Members of my family have participated in every major American war. One of my uncles, John C. Marion of Atlanta, was honored in 2004 for his service during World War II. He received a special card from President and Mrs. George W. Bush, and a letter of thanks from Georgia Gov. Sonny Perdue. Tracing our line deeper into history, I found three relatives who served in South Carolina regiments during the Revolutionary War: my African forefather Quamno, his son Peter – both servants of John Marion (a close relative of Francis) – and Oscar Marion, who, as a child, played with the general and, as a man, fought alongside him.

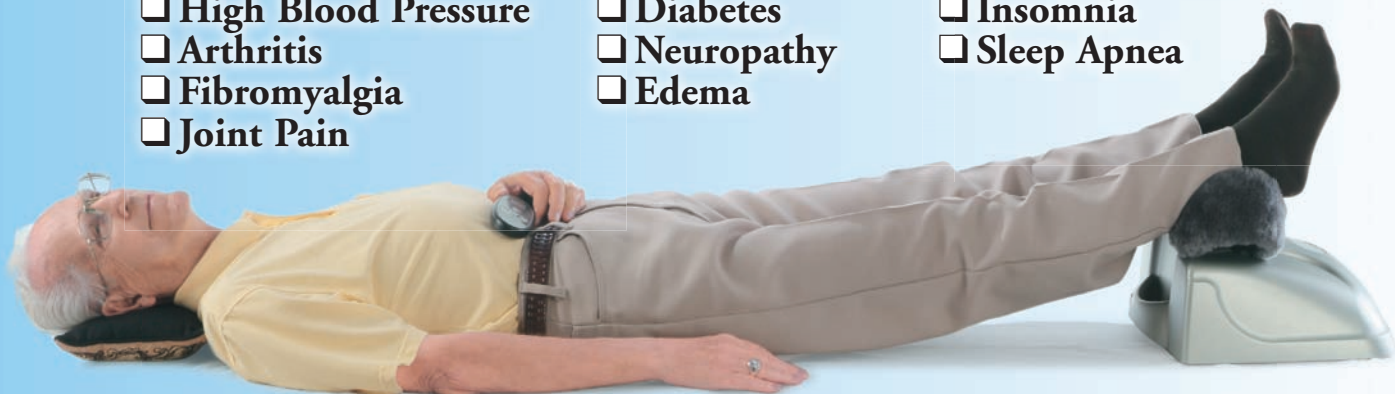
In his analysis of William Cullen Bryant's poem "Song of Marion's Men," Rupert S. Holland provides the following context:

"The British had succeeded in defeating most of the

The kneeling slave depicted in John Blake White's painting "Marion Inviting a British Officer to Share His Meal" is most likely Oscar Marion, ancestor of author Tina C. Jones. The painting hangs in the third-floor corridor of the Senate wing at the U.S. Capitol.

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As a Chiropractor, I would like to say that the Exerciser 2000 Elite™ enables people to benefit themselves at home. It is a valuable asset in moving lymph fluid, oxygenating the blood, increasing immune system function, maintaining mobility in the spine, and additionally freeing up a spine that has become stiff and arthritic. —*Garry Gorsuch, D.C.*

The ad I saw almost sounded "too good to be true". With your no risk money back guarantee I figured I had nothing to lose so I purchased the machine... and boy, am I glad I did! I am 75 years old and suffer from sciatica, which makes my back and legs tighten up and causes numbness. I was taking 8-10 Aleve™ every day. After using the machine for only 4 minutes, I noticed my lower back loosening up. Since I have been using the machine I haven't taken any pain pills and have been pain free. My sciatica is not giving me problems anymore and my body stays loosened up. I have also had a snoring problem for quite some time, however, since using the machine my snoring has subsided. My wife is so excited! I cannot tell you how much this machine has turned my life around. —*C. Cummings*

After having a stroke, I could no longer exercise the way I used to. As a result, I developed edema. A friend of mine introduced me to the Exerciser 2000 Elite™. I loved it and I purchased one for myself. After using the machine daily for a few weeks, my symptoms of edema were completely gone. I now use the machine twice a day for 16 minutes each time on speed 3. What a wonderful way to exercise. —*Robert M.*

I love using the Exerciser 2000 Elite™ after my morning workout. It is an excellent way to cool down and it helps to start my day off right. —*Deanna C., Kansas*

I have had constipation problems for over 25 years. Since I have been using the Exerciser 2000 Elite™ I have been regular every day and have begun to lose weight. This is truly a blessing and is so easy to use. —*Jeannie*

I am in my late 80's and have diabetes. The first thing I noticed when I started using my machine was that my feet were warm when I went to bed. They were always ice cold before. Because one of my problems is poor circulation, I use the machine three times a day for 10 minutes each; in the morning, late afternoon and just before bed. I almost forgot to mention that I have not been able to lift my arms above my head. Now I can do it. You think that's no big deal until you can't do it anymore. —*Ralph K.*

My husband and I have been into natural products all of our lives but nothing has ever affected us like the Exerciser 2000 Elite™. My husband is 72 and delivers flowers. He carries 5 gallon buckets of water. Since using the machine, his back hasn't hurt him at all. My hips would hurt if I stood too long and I would get weak and have to sit down. Now I can walk and sit as long as I want. I don't take pain medication anymore. In the morning, when I get out of bed I'm not stiff anymore. At 65, wow, this is great! Thank you for offering such a great machine. We are going to tell everyone we know about it. —*Cheryl J.*

I had suffered with sleep apnea for many years and had been taking drugs for it. I was told I would have to use a breathing apparatus. In the meantime, I was introduced to the Exerciser 2000 Elite™ and decided to purchase one. Within two weeks, I was sleeping more deeply and restfully than ever before. —*David B.*

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SONG OF MARION'S MEN

Penned by William Cullen Bryant, this poem describes the guerrilla war fought by those who served under Gen. Francis Marion, including one of his own slaves, Oscar Marion.

Our band is few, but true and tried,
Our leader frank and bold;
The British soldier trembles
When Marion's name is told.
Our fortress is the good greenwood,
Our tent the cypress-tree;
We know the forest round us,
As seamen know the sea;
We know its walks of thorny vines,
Its glades of reedy grass,
Its safe and silent islands
Within the dark morass.

Woe to the English soldiery
That little dread us near!
On them shall light at midnight
A strange and sudden fear;
When, waking to their tents on fire,
They grasp their arms in vain,
And they who stand to face us
Are beat to earth again;
And they who fly in terror deem
A mighty host behind,
And hear the tramp of thousands
Upon the hollow wind.

Then sweet the hour that brings release
From danger and from toil;
We talk the battle over,
And share the battle's spoil.
The woodland rings with laugh and shout,
As if a hunt were up,
And woodland flowers are gathered
To crown the soldier's cup.
Well know the fair and friendly moon
The band that Marion leads –
The glitter of their rifles,
The scampering of their steeds.
'Tis life to feel the night-wind
That lifts his tossing mane.
A moment – and away,
Back to the pathless forest,
Before the peep of day.

Grave men there are by broad Santee,
Grave men with hoary hairs;
Their hearts are all with Marion,
For Marion are their prayers.
And lovely ladies greet our band,
With kindest welcoming,
With smiles like those of summer,
And tears like those of spring.
For them we wear these trusty arms,
And lay them down no more
Till we have driven the Briton,
Forever, from our shore.



Gen. Francis Marion became known as the "Swamp Fox."

American troops in South Carolina by 1780, and had laid waste much of that state, confiscating plantations, burning houses, and hanging such as they termed traitors without giving them any form of trial. The city of Charleston surrendered to Sir Henry Clinton, the American General Gates was defeated at the Battle of Camden, August 16, 1780, and General Sumter at Fishing Creek, August 18, 1780. After that there was only one organized

American force in South Carolina, 'Marion's Brigade,' as it was called. This was a band of troopers led by General Francis Marion, a native of South Carolina, whose ancestors were French Huguenot refugees. At first his troop contained only twenty men, but more joined his band, and for three years they carried on irregular warfare, harassing the British forces more than regular soldiers could have done.

"Marion's men defeated a large body of Tories at Briton's Neck without losing a single man, and soon after beat the enemy twice by sudden attacks when the Tories were unaware of armed men being near. Marion managed to escape General Tarleton by disappearing into a swamp after a chase of twenty-five miles. Tarleton complained, 'As for this damned old fox, the Devil himself could not catch him.' This won the daring leader the name of 'Swamp Fox,' by which he was known all through the countryside."

The "Swamp Fox" was not alone while executing maneuvers that bewildered the British and gave hope to patriots in the South. Oscar Marion – described in early writings as "one of his faithful Negro servants" – was at the general's side so consistently during the war that he was captured on canvas by several of the most famous American artists of the time. John Blake White, William Ranney and Alonzo Chapel all painted various images of Revolutionary War events that included Oscar somewhere near his master, Gen. Francis Marion. As I have researched his life, I have identified my ancestor in many other historical paintings located in fine museums around the country.

A soldier by day and sous chef by night, Oscar is shown roasting sweet potatoes for a British officer in a famous oil painting by John Blake White that later was engraved and printed onto South Carolina's \$10 Confederate notes and \$5 postwar notes. In art and literature, Oscar can be found hiding in the swamps with Gen. Marion and his other men. He can be found rowing as they travel up and



Gen. Francis Marion and his militia were experts in guerrilla tactics, harassing British forces and attacking their supply lines. In this William Ranney painting, the "Swamp Fox" and his men, including Oscar Marion, are shown crossing the Pee Dee River.

down the Pee Dee River. He is depicted handling Gen. Marion's horse while floating down the river. In another painting, he is seen as a soldier in full uniform, mounted on a horse and armed with a rifle. There is also a provocative painting showing both Marion men sharing a white horse. It appears that Oscar has been wounded and is being assisted by the general; they are crossing shallow water along the Pee Dee River as their horses stop for a drink, and Oscar is carrying a brass bugle around his right shoulder, revealing another of his many duties as one of Marion's Men.

Oscar fought in the siege of Savannah in 1779, the siege of Charleston in 1780, and the Battle of Eutaw Springs in 1781. His efforts alongside Gen. Francis Marion and his militia helped set up the Continental Army's eventual victory over forces led by British Gen. Charles Cornwallis at Yorktown, Va.

More than 225 years later, Oscar's exploits were portrayed by the character Occam in the 2000 movie "The Patriot," which starred Mel Gibson. This role portrays Oscar as a valiant soldier fighting and helping his fellow militia men during the war.

During my research efforts, I identified Oscar in a famous oil painting by John Blake White that has been on exhibit at the U.S. Capitol building for more than a century; his identity had been unknown. Unmasking the identity of my collateral ancestor, I presented my evidence to the U.S. Senate Curator's Office and, after verification, the U.S. Senate curator agreed to update their official records to reflect Oscar's identification. After pressing government officials, I also received permission to organize a special ceremony to honor my relative's unique contribution to America's military history. My goal and desire was to give this African-American patriot his due place in U.S. history, and reviving his little-known story.

On Dec. 15, 2006, at the U.S. Capitol in Washington, Oscar Marion was finally given post-Revolu-

tionary War recognition for service to his country. His family received a special proclamation and certificate from President Bush and U.S. Rep. Albert Wynn, D-Md., on behalf of a grateful nation. The program included a musical prelude by the 257th Army Band, and remarks from Senate Curator Diane K. Skvarla, NBC News correspondent Tracie Potts and Smithsonian Institute historian Margaret S. Vining, a consultant for "The Patriot." Debra Newman Ham, historian and history professor at Morgan State University, served as main speaker.

In addition, the program included excerpts from "The Patriot" featuring the character Occam, played by actor Jay Arlen Jones. It was a wonderful ceremony that had media coverage, including a front-page story in *The Washington Post*. After the story was published, I was contacted by a distant nephew of Gen. Francis Marion: Robert Simmons, who was an extra in "The Patriot." We have since met, and I feel I have come full circle in learning my family history.

I am continuing to lead various efforts to restore the Oscar Marion story, including contacting U.S. municipalities named after Francis Marion and requesting they update their records to include Oscar's name. These municipalities began, or were named, about the same time as famous artists were painting images that included Oscar.

It is my hope that others will not only find Oscar's story interesting, but that they will be encouraged and motivated to start their own family history treasure hunts, as I did. 🌿

Tina C. Jones, an author and teacher, is founder and president of the American Historical Interpretation Foundation. www.americanhistorical.com



A Place to Call Home

Institutional children's homes have nearly vanished across America, but not in Ponca City, Okla., where The American Legion still fulfills an oath made long ago.

Brandy Simons

BY BRANDY BALLENGER

Air conditioning wasn't available in 1944 to combat Oklahoma's summer temperatures. The nights were hot, the air in the dormitories was still, and sleep was nearly impossible. To escape the heat, girls would climb down the drainpipe, salt shakers in hand, to sit on the front steps and eat cool, sweet tomatoes from the garden. Midnight tomatoes were a luxury for Frieda Elliott, Frances Sanders Pierce and JoAnn Monger. With parents who were either dead or unable to care for them, the girls had nowhere to go. They had been shuffled from what were then known as "preventoriums" to hospitals – until they found sanctuary at The American Legion Children's Home (ALCH) in Ponca City, Okla.

Pierce says the ALCH was much more than

another temporary sanctuary. "They taught us right from wrong. I don't know what would've happened to us without the home."

More than 60 years later, memories of caring housemothers, childhood pranks and support

from Legion family members remain clear, as does the impact the home is still making today – even though much has changed over the years.

80th Birthday Bash

On Aug. 15, 2008, with help from residents, staff, alumni and National Commander Marty Conatser, The American Legion Children's Home in Ponca City, Okla., will celebrate its 80th anniversary at the former residence of E.W. Marland, an oilman whose generosity made the home possible. The festivities will be held as a "thank you" to all past and future sponsors of the home.

www.americanlegionchildrenshomes.org

Staying in Business When Others Didn't. The American Legion Children's Home sprouted from the seeds of generosity. Local oilmen donated land, resources and

funds that, when combined with sizeable contributions from The American Legion, allowed the facility to open its doors to needy children in 1928. While donations provided the structure, it was the involvement of Legion family members that made

the facility a home. Elliott remembers her sponsor, a member of a local Auxiliary unit, making all her clothes by hand. Local posts sponsored sports and square-dance teams. The former residents recall a huge linen closet annually filled with Christmas gifts donated by Legion family members. Cooperation between dedicated volunteers and school administrators put the welfare of the child first, and set the home apart from other children's institutions across the country.

The era of big, institutional orphanages suffered through the late 20th century, because of perceptions in movies and literature that painted them as bleak, compassionless warehouses administered by cruel disciplinarians. In some areas, the perception was real, and child-abuse lawsuits forced closures or condemnations, leaving facilities vacant across America. How did The American Legion Children's Home in Ponca City manage to survive?

ALCH Director Bill Alexander has an answer. "We pride ourselves on our reputation as a school and home, rather than an institution. And we owe a portion of that reputation to our association with The American Legion name."

Support for such institutions can be traced back to the Legion's beginning in 1919, when it boldly promised "A Square Deal for Every Child." That promise represents the early objectives that are still alive today among The American Legion Children & Youth Division programs. The American Legion strives to assure care and protection for the children of veterans, and to improve conditions for all young people. Recently, the Legion's Child Welfare Foundation awarded its largest-ever grant of \$64,000 to the ALCH, to fund promotional material and outreach.

The Changing Landscape. As the ALCH discovered several years ago, it's impossible to restrict services only to children of veterans. The whole idea of a separate home for veterans' children came wrapped in miles of red tape, which detracted from the institution's central mission to assist children. In a relatively short time, the home realized it couldn't close its doors to many other children who needed help.

Reserving spots for children with veteran relatives requires the availability of private-placement beds. Twenty years ago, the ALCH could not keep all those beds filled. At the same time, state institutions were forced to close their children's homes. Oklahoma's Department of Human Services (DHS)

approached the Ponca City home with an option to contract beds for displaced children. In order to be placed in DHS custody, these children are proven to have been abused, neglected or deprived. Sadly, this category included many children of veterans. ALCH realized that cooperating with DHS could be the most direct route to assist children with veteran connections, while making it easier to secure funding – thus enabling the facility to remain open while others were closing down.

David, a current ALCH resident, is the son of a Navy veteran. He has forged strong bonds with his sponsors and mentors at the facility, including local American Legion Auxiliary members. They take him shopping, on vacations and out for lunch. "There are good people here," David says. "I might be in a detention center if I hadn't come here." His case is an example of how the facility's partnership with Oklahoma's DHS allows the home to continue reaching out to children of veterans. Because DHS considers ALCH the preferred placement for young people with veteran connections, over half the children currently in residence meet the home's original criteria.

But it's not an easy task. Over time, beds contracted to the state increased until ALCH had guaranteed DHS nearly all of its available beds. The problem became how to accommodate veteran families who needed assistance, whose children weren't in DHS custody. With Operation Iraqi Freedom under way, requests were increasing. Grandparents found themselves unable to control children left in their care during parent deployments. For example, a father stationed at Tinker



A staff member donated her horses and equipment three times a week during the start of the equine therapy program, allowing the home's children to interact with the animals by participating in team-building exercises. — Brandy Simons



Residents of The American Legion Children's Home find creative ways to stay cool during the hot Oklahoma summers. Brandy Simons

Air Force Base in Oklahoma needed temporary placement for his oldest son during a deployment. In a three-month time frame, more than a dozen families were turned away. The denials weigh heavily on ALCH's administrators, who take their responsibility to veteran families seriously. "This is what this home was built for," Alexander said. "Our country is at war again, and servicemembers and their children have earned this assistance."

But providing all the care necessary comes down to money. "Roots and Wings" is the building campaign currently under way to secure funding to designate a dorm specifically for veterans' children. Ideally, contributions would enable ALCH to build the additional dorm. "It's tough," said Kerri Bowman, the home's administrative

assistant. "We can't forsake the children we have, but we want to return to our original mission to provide a home for the children of veterans." Right now, ALCH administrators feel the two groups of children have distinctly different needs, and should not be integrated. The prospect of reclaiming the original mission may be difficult. But with increased funding, the Ponca City facility hopes to help more families with needs, whether from DHS custody or military deployment.

Alternative to Foster Care. Today, foster care is touted as the universal solution for children in need. But the needs of children vary as widely as their personalities and histories. Some children require structure, consistent supervision and

'It's the Legion family ... that makes it a home'

The American Legion has been active in the management and support of children's homes across the country since its inception, notably in Pennsylvania – home to the Scotland School for Veterans' Children – and a facility in Michigan that is now closed. One facility that continues to thrive is The Indiana Soldiers' and Sailors' Children's Home in Knightstown, Ind.

ISSCH has offered care to veteran-connected children in need for nearly 140 years. By offering unwavering support since 1919, The American Legion helped insulate the children's home from the wave of closures that swept the country in the second half of the 20th century. ISSCH prides itself on the fact that 99 percent of its students are relatives of veterans in need of a home and education.

The goal of the Knightstown home is to take at-risk youth and offer them opportunities to excel. But creating such an atmosphere requires more than buildings and textbooks funded by the state. The school maintains that children

need comfort, guidance and support along with education, opportunity and direction. These core values of the ISSCH echo those advocated by The American Legion.



Children have received exceptional care in Knightstown, Ind., for more than a century.

The Knightstown Home Committee, comprised of 11 district representatives, is the glue that secures this partnership. The facility submits annual wish lists to the committee and, in turn, the committee does its best to see that every need is met through the generosity of Legion family members. Superintendent Paul Wilkinson says the Legion's influence is visible in every aspect of the facility. "It's impossible to look at any part of this home without seeing a contribution made by The American Legion."

From the 460-acre grounds to dormitory living rooms, it is obvious the relationship is working. Contributions have included everything from a state-of-the-art fitness center and basketball courts to televisions, refrigerators, furniture, computers, and even an outdoor amphitheater. Individual Legion family members, posts and districts have generously

discipline to guide them along a productive path through life. In those circumstances, the stability of a group home is required. Group homes like ALCH offer the advantage of teaching children to live cooperatively among others. Monger says the group setting shaped her life. “We were one big family,” she said. Another benefit to that environment is the opportunity for intensive therapy. The Ponca City home offers a variety of treatment options that range from group and individual counseling sessions to equine therapy. For the type of child who resides at ALCH, therapy is vital. “The reality is, kids can be too damaged to break the cycle without interference,” Alexander says. “We try to break the chain.”

Financially, Legion family members and posts offer monetary sponsorships for children at the home. For \$800 a year, one child can receive clothes and a winter coat, as well as Christmas and birthday gifts. And while giving on a larger scale is needed, it’s the interactive involvement



The American Legion Children's Home provides a family atmosphere for its employees and residents. Brandy Simons

between Legionnaires and the kids that Alexander says makes the most impact. “It’s great for these kids to be exposed to a wonderful grandparent relationship. They benefit from their knowledge and values.”

While forced to adapt to today’s needs, The American Legion Children’s Home has managed to stay connected to one of its most time-honored goals – making a positive impact on children in need. It worked more than 60 years ago for children like Frieda Elliott, Frances Sanders Pierce and JoAnn Monger, and it still works today. There are hurdles to overcome, but Alexander said he and his staff are ready to face them, with help from the home’s key benefactor. “The

American Legion has supported us for 80 years, and the organization represents good things,” he said. “We wouldn’t be here without it.” 🌿

Brandy Ballenger is a writer and assistant director of operations for The American Legion Magazine.

donated over the years to provide birthday gifts, tickets to sporting events and school uniforms for students.

While material items are necessary, ISSCH likewise relies on the spiritual support of The American Legion to assist with responsibility and citizenship. Such values are advanced through support of a successful 4-H program, involvement with a school-sponsored Boy Scout Troop and a popular ROTC program.

ISSCH encourages education and life skills. It provides comprehensive vocational training that ranges from veterinary science to culinary arts. Members of the building trade program construct houses in a local subdivision, from the ground up, with help from Legion mentors who give on-site training in such skills as electrical wiring and plumbing. These houses are then sold back to the community, with profits reinvested in the school.

When students near graduation, ISSCH continues to stand beside each individual as he or she enters the world. Scholarships are distributed to those who continue their education. For students planning to enter the workforce, an apartment on campus is provided, where they learn how to be fiscally responsible and practice independent living skills.

The Knightstown home focuses on the whole child and, while education and responsibility are key points, emotional and recreational needs of the children are met, too. As with

all other avenues of the program, the school’s recreation fund benefits greatly from Legion generosity. The fund relies entirely on donations, since the state allocates no funding. Proms, yearbooks and class trips, along with an annual Legion Day in September, are provided through monetary gifts. Children without families are welcomed into Legion homes for the holidays. Wilkinson says, “The state provides us with an institution, but it’s the Legion family that makes that institution a home.”

Crafting a life for a child in need is a complicated process. Values, morals, education, recreation and structure must all be carefully woven together. When a facility stands for family, that facility must ensure it is capable of meeting the challenge. For most of those who pass through the Legion-supported school, its message comes through loud and clear, and the results come in the form of lessons that guide its alums for the rest of their lives. As ISSCH knows, this can only be achieved through partnership with a caring organization like The American Legion whose members are generous and willing to invest time and money in the life of a child. According to Luke, a resident at ISSCH, this cooperation is working. “I’ve learned life is what you make of it. You develop and adapt. I came here and bettered myself.”

– Brandy Ballenger

RESPECT

FOR THE RED, WHITE AND BLUE

U.S. FLAG CODE is federal law, providing rules for proper display, treatment and respect for Old Glory. No committee of Congress has sole authority over the flag. No government agency controls its place in society. There are no flag police. The U.S. Flag Code essentially belongs to the people, and its enforcement is most often conducted through education. The code has been modified many times over the years, including 2008, when military personnel and veterans were given authority to salute the flag even when not in uniform.

FREQUENTLY ASKED FLAG QUESTIONS

HOW DO I PROPERLY DISPOSE OF AN UNSERVICEABLE FLAG?

U.S. Flag Code states that the Stars and Stripes should not touch anything beneath it, but it is not a requirement to destroy a flag that has touched the ground. This section of the code is to encourage care in the handling of the flag in order to protect it from becoming soiled or damaged. A U.S. Flag that is soiled but not worn or damaged may be washed or dry-cleaned.

When a flag is worn or damaged to the point where it is no longer fit for display, the U.S. Flag Code suggests that, "it should be destroyed, preferably by burning." American Legion posts and Boy Scout troops conduct disposal ceremonies to provide dignified and solemn disposal of unserviceable flags.

SHOULD A FLAG BE DISPLAYED IN INCLEMENT WEATHER?

The flag should not be displayed during inclement weather unless it is made from an all-weather material such as nylon. Most modern flags are made of all-weather materials.

WHY DO MILITARY FLAG PATCHES APPEAR BACKWARDS?

The U.S. Flag patch on the right shoulder of a military uniform is reversed to reflect the proper method of displaying a flag that is moving, as if it is being carried forward into battle, during time of war

FLAG AT HALF-STAFF

U.S. Flag Code was amended in 2007 to expand the authority of state governors to issue proclamations ordering the U.S. Flag to fly at half-staff after the death of a member of the U.S. Armed Forces. Federal installations and facilities within a state governor's jurisdiction shall follow such proclamations.

When a U.S. Flag is raised to half-staff, it should first be hoisted vigorously to the peak and then slowly lowered into position.

Mayors, other than the mayor of the District of Columbia, do not have authority to issue proclamations to fly the U.S. Flag at half-staff.



FLAG APPAREL

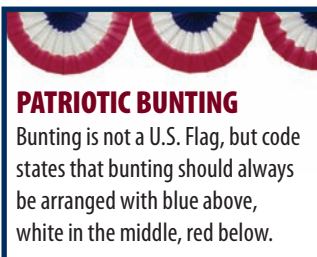
As long as they are not made from actual U.S. Flags, patriotic articles of clothing and accessories featuring the Stars and Stripes are not a violation of Flag Code.

emblem.legion.org



PATRIOTIC BUNTING

Bunting is not a U.S. Flag, but code states that bunting should always be arranged with blue above, white in the middle, red below.



BIKE FLAGS

Legion Riders often display flags on the backs of motorcycles. The proper position for Old Glory, when two different flags are displayed, is on the rider's right. One U.S. Flag: center or right.



VETERANS, TROOPS CAN ALWAYS SALUTE

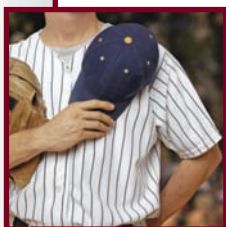
A change to Section 9 of the U.S. Flag Code written into the Defense Authorization



Act this year now gives veterans and members of the U.S. Armed Forces the authority to render a

salute to the flag, whether or not they are in uniform or wearing identifying veteran apparel such as an American Legion cap.

All others present should remove any headwear, face the flag and place their right hand over their heart.



Headwear should be held to the left shoulder, leaving the right hand over the heart.

These acts are to be conducted anytime there is a hoisting or lowering of the U.S. Flag, whenever it passes. Citizens of foreign countries should stand at attention.

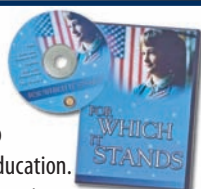
OH SAY, CAN YOU SEE?

It is customary to display outdoor flags only from sunrise to sunset. However, a U.S. Flag may be displayed 24 hours a day if properly illuminated during the hours of darkness. The American Legion interprets proper illumination as a light specifically placed to illuminate the flag (preferred) or having a light source sufficient to illuminate the flag so it is recognizable as such by the casual observer. The light of the moon can provide such illumination.



FLAG DVD

"For Which it Stands" is a 20-minute video and teacher's guide designed to help schools provide flag education. It is available in the flag education area of Emblem Sales. emblem.legion.org



MEMORIAL FLAGS

U.S. Flag Code does not prohibit later flying of a casket flag used in a funeral service. Rather, it is a fitting tribute to the memory of the deceased veteran and their service when the casket flag is displayed.



FLAG CODE

The entire text of U.S. Flag Code is available online. www.legion.org/national/americanflag/flagcode

[ACTIVE DUTY]

No cold pills in Iraq

The following words came from an e-mail sent by Army Pfc. Troy Ruffin (right) on July 4, 2007. A combat medic with the Third Infantry Division, Ruffin recently returned from deployment in Iraq.

The weather here has gotten extremely hot. Typically the temperatures are between 115 and 120, though it can easily climb higher. Even with all the heat, we still are keeping a high operations tempo; we've been running missions day and night, and on a number of occasions have been out walking through town during the hottest part of the day.

The local population has a better idea regarding the heat; during the most intense part of the day, they close down most of the shops, and they go home. The shops reopen sometime in the late afternoon and remain open until after sundown. We are sure we are the butt of jokes when the locals see us walking around wearing all that gear in the middle of the day; even though we don't know for sure what they're saying, it can't be far from, "Stupid Americans ... only they would be out walking in this heat." Oh well. At least

they know we're tough, if a little lacking in intelligence. At least we haven't had any heat injuries.

An article in the newspaper we receive here had to do with rumors going around Iraq regarding American troops. Some, we're sure, are propaganda spread by the insurgents, such as Americans eating babies and stealing children, or that the airborne troops dye their berets with enemy blood. My favorite is the rumor that Americans have a "cold pill." I thought this was a pill for the common cold, but I was wrong. Apparently, a lot of Iraqis believe we take a pill that keeps our bodies cold and enables us to wear all that gear out in the sun. We wish.

Another rumor is that we all wear X-ray glasses that allow us to see through cars, walls and even people's clothing.

The big obstacle that we're trying to fix is the electrical supply to the city. In a neighbor-



ing town, some insurgent blew up the power plant, so for the last couple of weeks the locals have been living without AC or lights. Some of the bigger houses have generators, but it's usually only wealthier families that can afford them. Most of the population have taken to sleeping in their courtyards or on the roofs since it's a lot cooler outside at night. A couple of nights ago we went into a house, and I was checking to make sure the courtyard was secure; as I was

[NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE]

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED... Spring Meetings 2008

For the full text of resolutions passed during the National Executive Committee Spring Meetings in Indianapolis, contact The American Legion National Headquarters Library at (317) 630-1366, e-mail library@legion.org or visit www.legion.org.

Send a written request for a booklet of all approved resolutions to

The Library, The American Legion, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206.

AMERICANISM

8 Awards 2010 American Legion Baseball World Series to Spokane, Wash.

10 Moves 2009 American Legion Baseball Regional Tournaments from Aug. 12-16 to Aug. 6-10

12 Supports the efforts of the Office of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services' Task Force on New Americans, and encourages posts to provide instructional space and citizenship classes to legal immigrants seeking U.S. citizenship

20 Enters American Legion into two-year agreement with Fundamental Company Inc., to benefit American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund through magazine subscription sales

21 Enters American Legion into agreement with DeVry University to establish The American Legion DeVry University Scholarship

FOREIGN RELATIONS

8 Affirms intent to collaborate with War Veterans Committee in the mission of



[STATEMENT]

"For the first time in the post-9/11 period, America will be under new leadership next January. That means the presidential speeches and debates in the months to come will be especially heated.

"We all know Article II, Section II of The American Legion Constitution: 'The American Legion shall be absolutely nonpolitical and shall not be used for the dissemination of partisan principles nor for the promotion of the candidacy of any person seeking public office or preferment.'

"That does not mean we check out of the political process. It means we engage it. We engage it fairly, vocally, with our resolution-driven positions on national issues to guide our way. When we put on our American Legion caps or open the doors to our posts, we do so as non-partisans."

American Legion National Commander
Marty Conatser

going around the corner, I almost tripped over a sleeping child. Thankfully I didn't wake her, as I'm sure that would have been rather frightful. Always something to keep us on our toes.

About a month ago we had to give up one of our medics to cover for another unit that was short; that left us with three medics instead of four. We've definitely been earning our keep with all the missions we've been on. I just hit my 200th mission, and we're not yet halfway

through our tour. So far we haven't had any problems covering all the missions.

We're more than happy to take on a little extra work because we know that our break is coming up soon. Usually, we can even out the schedule to make sure no one medic gets swamped, but there have definitely been days where I've gotten back off a mission at 4 in the morning and had to get up two hours later to head back out. At least it makes the time go by quickly.



[ACTIVE DUTY]

In sickness, in health... and in war

The Army has quietly lifted a longstanding policy restricting soldiers who are husband and wife from living and sleeping together when deployed in a war zone. The policy change apparently is in effect only in Iraq.

"It's better for soldiers, which means overall it's better for the Army," Command Maj. Mark Thornton told the Associated Press, which reports that Army-wide, there are some 10,000 married couples.

So-called "couples' rows" have sprung up at camps in Iraq since the restriction was lifted in 2006.

"It makes a lot of things easier," Sgt. Marvin Frazier told the AP. "It really adds a lot of stress, being separated."

achieving accountability of POW-MIAs worldwide

INTERNAL AFFAIRS

19 Supports planned expansion of National World War II Museum in New Orleans

22 Encourages the White House, VA and Congress to approve, plan and conduct an appropriate ceremony to honor Frank Buckles, the last living World War I veteran

VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION

14 Petitions VA to include in its award letters the last page of the rating decision

15 Urges VA to adopt computerized tomography (CT) scanning during Compensation & Pension exams

16 Urges making Native American code talkers eligible for interment at Arlington National Cemetery

[AMERICANISM]

This divine image of the Constitution's framers was created partially by 19th-century historians who wrote that the Constitution was literally handed down by God, but we know better than that now, and the framers knew better than that, too ...

None of these framers of the Constitution were gods; none of them had supernatural powers; none of them had divine foresight. They all had very human flaws and attributes, but they all contributed to the creation of a powerful, lasting government.

From the winning speech, "Our Fallible Framers," delivered by 2008 American Legion National High School Oratorical Scholarship Program champion Spencer Harjung of Elkton, Md.

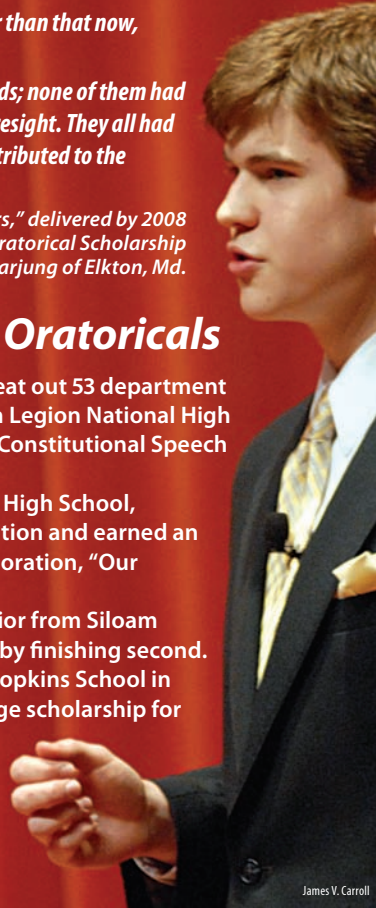
Maryland student wins Oratoricals

A high-school senior from Elkton, Md., beat out 53 department champions to win the 71st Annual American Legion National High School Oratorical Scholarship Program – A Constitutional Speech Contest – in Indianapolis on April 6.

Spencer Harjung, a student at Rising Sun High School, advanced through three rounds of competition and earned an \$18,000 college scholarship for his winning oration, "Our Fallible Framers."

Virginia Macfarlan, a home-schooled junior from Siloam Springs, Ark., earned a \$16,000 scholarship by finishing second. Christopher Pagliarella, a senior from the Hopkins School in Seymour, Conn., took home a \$14,000 college scholarship for his third-place finish.

The American Legion developed the oratorical contest to encourage young people to improve their communication skills and to study the U.S. Constitution.



James V. Carroll

[VERBATIM]

"Freedom is not only a gift, but also a summons to personal responsibility. Americans know this from experience – almost every town in this country has its monuments honoring those who sacrificed their lives in defense of freedom, both at home and abroad. The preservation of freedom calls for the cultivation of virtue, self-discipline, sacrifice for the common good, and a sense of responsibility towards the less fortunate. It also demands the courage to engage in civic life and to bring one's deepest beliefs and values to reasoned public debate. In a word, freedom is ever new. It is a challenge held out to each generation, and it must constantly be won over for the cause of good."

Pope Benedict XVI, during his April visit to the United States

"Both of us reaffirmed once again that under no circumstances would we allow North Korea to possess nuclear weapons."

President Lee Myung-Bak, during his summit with President Bush at Camp David, the first-ever visit by a Korean president to the presidential retreat

"We don't want to be criticized by future generations for not doing enough now as were those who dealt with the Germans then."

Baltimore City Councilman James Kraft, equating the use of plastic bags with German extermination tactics

"It's one of the bigger Cadillacs. I've got a desk in it. It's like an airplane."

U.S. Rep. Charles B. Rangel, D-N.Y., on the taxpayer-financed 2004 Cadillac DeVille he leases for \$777.54 a month

"The reality is this is the battlefield of the mind."

Marine Gen. Douglas Stone, who has changed attitudes of guards and al-Qaeda detainees – having imams give religious re-education programs and offering art classes – at Camp Bucca, the largest U.S. detention facility in Iraq

"If you look at what grows on computer keyboards ... it's more or less a reflection of what's in your nose and in your gut."

Peter Wilson, microbiologist at University College London Hospital, on a recent study showing that office computer keyboards can harbor five times the amount of bacteria as toilet seats

"My sex has got nothing to do with it. I believed in myself as a driver."

Danica Patrick, on becoming the first female winner in IndyCar history, after capturing the Indy Japan 300 race

[AMERICANISM]

Minnesota teen named Eagle Scout of the Year

Eighteen-year-old Paul J.P. Banwart, a senior at Shakopee High School in Minnesota, has been named The American Legion Eagle Scout of the Year for 2008. The award, which includes a \$10,000 scholarship, was announced during the National Executive Committee Spring Meetings at Indianapolis in May.



The Legion's Eagle Scout of the Year award recognizes Banwart's practical citizenship at school and in Scouting, as well as his passion and commitment to the environment and conservation. For his Eagle Scout project, Banwart demonstrated the importance of bat habitats in addressing public-health concerns dealing with meningitis and West Nile Virus, through the construction of bat boxes to house more than 650 bats and the creation of an informational brochure and Web site. As an Adopt-A-Park sponsor, Banwart also

orchestrated an environmental project involving the Department of Natural Resources and Deer Hunters associations while enlisting Cub Scouts in the planting of 300 trees to provide wildlife cover and prevent erosion.

The Legion also awarded \$2,500 scholarships to Tyler James Moore of Marine, Ill.; Brandon Charles Drozd of Genoa, Neb.; and David M. Cairns of Stowe, Vt.

Going . . . Going . . . Gone!



Mauser K98-M48 Series

This WWII-era K98 Mauser variant, known as the M48, is still Military-New.

Built with German technology in Serbia after the Germans were driven out, the Victory Crest on the receiver has the date '1943', commemorating Yugoslav victory.



As seen on the History Channel

This last supply of high-quality WWII-era Mausers is still in Military-New condition. Bright Bores and Matching Numbers.

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NEW SPORTS TECHNOLOGY

New lure's catch rate may be too high for some tournaments.

Out-fishes other bait 19 to 4 in one contest.

Uses aerospace technology to mimic a real fish.

ORLANDO, FL— A small company in Connecticut has developed a new lure that mimics the motion of a real fish so realistically eight professionals couldn't tell the difference between it and a live shad when it "swam" toward them on retrieval. The design eliminates wobbling, angled swimming and other unnatural motions that problem other hard bait lures. It swims upright and appears to propel itself with its tail.

Curiously, the company may have designed it too well. Tournament fishermen who have used it said it's possible officials will not allow it in contests where live bait is prohibited. They claim it swims more realistically than anything they have ever seen. If so, that would hurt the company's promotional efforts. Winning tournaments is an important part of marketing a new lure.

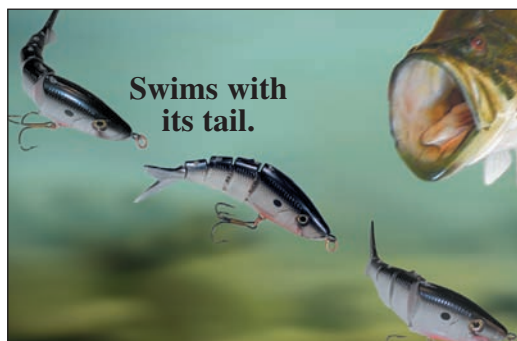
Fish would probably prefer to see it restricted. I watched eight veteran fishermen test the new lure (called The KickTail®) on a lake outside Orlando FL for about four hours. Four used the KickTail and four used a combination

of their favorite lures and shiners (live bait). The four using the KickTail caught 41 fish versus 14 for the other four. In one boat the KickTail won 19 to 4. The KickTail also caught bigger fish, which suggests it triggers larger, less aggressive fish to strike.

The KickTail's magic comes from a patented technology that breaks the tail into five segments. As water rushes by on retrieval, a little-known principle called aeronautical flutter causes the tail to wag left and right, as if the lure were propelling itself with its tail. Unlike other hard baits, the head remains stationary—only the tail wags. A company spokesman told me this.

"Marine biologists will tell you that the more a lure swims like a real fish, the more fish it will catch. Well, the only live thing the KickTail doesn't do is breathe. It's always swimming wild and free. Fish can't stand it. We've seen fish that have just eaten go for the KickTail. It's like having another potato chip."

Whether you fish for fun or profit, if you want a near 3 to 1 advantage, I would order now before the KickTail becomes known. The company even guarantees a refund, if you don't catch more fish and return the lures within 30 days. There are three versions: a



New lure swims like a real fish--nearly triples catch in Florida contest.

floater, a diver and a "dying shad" with a weed guard. Each lure costs \$9.95 and you must order at least two. There is also a "Super 10-Pack" with additional colors for only \$79.95, a savings of almost \$20.00. S/h is only \$7.00 no matter how many you order.

To order call 1-800-873-4415 (Ask for item # kts), or click www.ngcsports.com/gear anytime or day or send a check or M.O. (or cc number and exp. date) to NGC Sports (Dept. KT-1417) 60 Church Street, Yalesville, CT 06492. CT add sales tax. The KickTail is four inches long and works in salt and fresh water.

KTS-8H © NGC Worldwide, Inc. 2008 Dept. KT-1417

[OUTDOORS]

RIVER RUNNER

World War II glider pilot still shoots the whitewater at 91.

Piloting a glider filled with troops and ammunition into combat during World War II has been described as akin to “flying a stick of dynamite through the gates of hell.” But Martin Litton downplays his time at the controls of a CG-4A glider in the European theater, just as he downplays the fact that, at age 91, he still takes death-defying journeys.

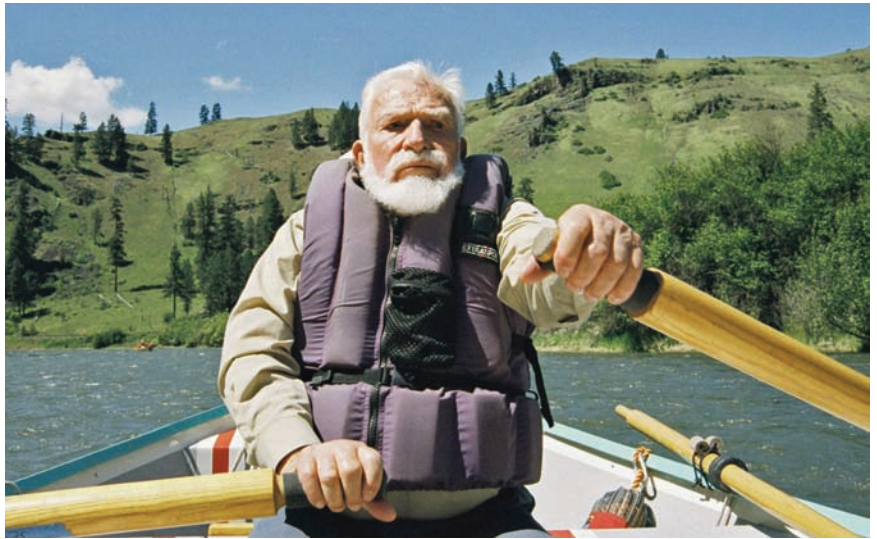
“I did not have a spectacular career,” says Litton, who served in the U.S. Army Air Force from June 1941 through February 1946 and today shoots river rapids, rowing a whitewater dory.

Litton logged about 400 hours in Army gliders during the war. He flew troops into Holland in 1944 as part of Operation Market Garden. He flew fuel and supplies into Bastogne and ferried the wounded to a field hospital in France. Litton also flew the engine-powered C-46 Curtiss Commando while in Europe and wrote occasional war dispatches for The Los Angeles Times. He later became a travel editor for Sunset.

A decade after World War II ended, Litton and his wife, Esther, became the 185th and 186th people to run the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon. He offered the first commercial oar-powered trips through the canyon in the late 1960s.

Litton sold his guiding business 20 years ago, but he continues to run rivers, twice the oldest person to row the Grand Canyon – at 80 and 82.

Despite two artificial knees, an angioplasty and the loss of a kidney to cancer last year, Litton has no plans to slow down. The American Legion Magazine spoke with him.



Ken Olsen

Q: What was it like flying gliders into combat?

A: We didn't have it anything like the B-17 pilots, who were completely fatigued making those daylight bombing runs and dodging flak hour after hour. There were only eight missions in World War II in which gliders went into combat. I was involved in just two: Operation Market Garden and Bastogne. I never got a scratch in Operation Market Garden. Bastogne was awful. There was snow. Everything was frozen. There was blood everywhere. We were flying in fuel, ammunition and military hardware and taking wounded out. They stacked the wounded like cordwood.

Q: Are you still flying?

A: Yes. I have to fight the FAA harder than anyone else, but I pass all of the physicals with flying colors.

Q: You and well-known Grand Canyon guide P.T. Reilly were among the first to lead trips through the Grand Canyon. How did that relationship develop?

A: I met P.T. Reilly at a barbecue in Van Nuys, Calif., and he called me and started bugging me to row. He knew I rowed crew at UCLA,

which, of course, was nothing like rowing the Grand Canyon. A couple of weeks before we were supposed to leave, I was thrown from a horse up in the Sierras and dislocated my shoulder. They used buckles and straps and chains and all kinds of things you couldn't imagine so I couldn't move my upper arm. I went down the river anyway, but I didn't row. The following year, we went again, and I rowed.

Q: You were one of the first to row Lava Falls, a legendary rapid that most boatmen were avoiding at the time. What was it like?

A: It was fun. I did a complete backward somersault in the rapid.

Q: How did you start Grand Canyon Dories and offering guided trips down the Colorado River in the late 1960s?

A: I just fell into it. People wanted to go and, not having any willpower, I couldn't say no. In those days, we charged \$180 for a 21-day trip and we picked people up in Las Vegas.

Q: What keeps you running rivers at your age?

A: I keep getting invited on trips.

– Ken Olsen

News Flash....**Government Gets Something Right****Super Light Titanium Timepiece Loses Only One Second Every 20 Million Years.**

BOULDER, Colorado The U.S. government has engineered the most ingenious, most accurate clock in the world: the F-1 U.S. Atomic Clock in Boulder, Colorado. Our extraordinary new Stauer Titanium Atomic Watch utilizes the transmissions directly from that remarkable cesium fission atomic clock to report the most precise time. This scientifically advanced timepiece will gain or lose only one second over a 20 million-year period. It is that accurate! This perfectly tuned technological invention with the super light strength of titanium is now available for UNDER \$200.

Super Light Titanium has two big advantages over steel. One is corrosion resistance and the other is that titanium has the highest strength-to-weight ratio of any metal, which means that titanium is approximately 45% lighter than steel. But every other titanium watch that we can find is

priced at over \$400, and none of those are nearly as accurate as our atomic movement. Stauer has decided to bring these resources together in a timepiece that has the most accurate movement available today. You'll never have to set this watch. Just push one of the buttons and you are synchronized with the atomic clock in Colorado, and the hands of the watch move to the exact time position. The sleek black textured dial has luminous hands and markers plus the timepiece is water resistant to 3 ATM.

A Titanium-clad offer. This Titanium Atomic Watch exceeds the accuracy of any Swiss luxury automatic so you can be more punctual and keep most of your money in your wallet, not on your wrist. Look at your watch and we guarantee that the time is incorrect, unless you are wearing the advanced atomic technology.

The Stauer Titanium Atomic Watch is not available in stores and it comes with our 30 day money-back guarantee. If you're not completely satisfied with the accuracy, simply return the watch for the full purchase price.

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[HISTORY]

Sacrifices of the Signers

*The sacrifices endured
by the founding fathers
aren't fully understood
by Americans living
in the 21st century.*



Nearly all 56 men at the Second Continental Congress could be labeled professional politicians. Twenty-four were lawyers by trade. Yet, by affixing their signatures to Thomas Jefferson's boldly worded Declaration of Independence, they risked everything. Five were later captured by the British and died after being tortured. Nine were wounded in engagements with the British, and 12 had their homes set on fire.

The British failed to capture Welshman Francis Lewis, who represented New York. But after burning his Long Island estate, they took his wife and threw her aboard a prison ship, where she died a few months later. Lewis never recovered.

Lewis Morris, Arthur Middleton and Richard Stockton also found their homes destroyed for signing. Thomas Nelson, Virginia's governor during the siege of Yorktown, begged George Washington to blow up his mansion when he learned Lord Cornwallis had made it his headquarters. Washington did just that, destroying Nelson's main financial asset.

Virginia merchant Carter Braxton owned a fleet of trading vessels when he signed. The Royal Navy made it a point to track down and sink his ships. North Carolina's Joseph Hewes also lost his merchant fleet – by donating it to become the core for the new Continental Navy. He died in 1779 at age 50.

Made wealthy through his import business, Robert Morris was placed in charge of America's dismal finances. To feed and equip Washington's troops for the famous "Crossing of the Delaware" – the psychological turning point of the war – Morris used \$10,000 of his own money, placing his personal fortune at the disposal of America. He later died in poverty.

A year after signing, William Whipple of New Hampshire fought alongside Ethan Allen, Benedict Arnold and Horatio Gates at Saratoga. The American victory there would bring France into the conflict. Connecticut's Oliver Wolcott and South Carolina's Arthur Middleton, Thomas Heyward and Edward Rutledge all saw combat. Middleton, Heyward and Rutledge were captured and tortured.

Georgian George Walton was taken prisoner in battle while a colonel and released during a prisoner exchange in 1779. Fellow Georgian Button Gwinnett led a failed invasion of British Florida after returning from Philadelphia. Shortly afterward, he was shot in a duel by political opponent Lachlan McIntosh.

New Jersey's Richard Stockton was captured in November 1776 and spent years in prison. After his release, he died a pauper in Princeton. British troops in New Jersey devastated the College of New Jersey the same month they captured him. John Witherspoon spent the remainder of the war rebuilding the college before he went blind in 1792. South Carolina's Thomas Lynch and his wife were lost at sea when their ship disappeared during a voyage to the West Indies.

Constant British pursuit prevented Delaware's Caesar Rodney from getting proper medical treatment for a cancerous growth on his face. It would claim his life in 1784.

Thomas Jefferson went on to be elected governor of Virginia but had to resign and go into hiding because the British hunted him relentlessly.

– Mike Coppock

[SAFETY]

Play it safe with fireworks

Resolution No. 33, passed by The American Legion National Executive Committee during the 2006 Spring Meetings, urges all departments and posts "to assist in alerting, informing, and educating parents, children, community leaders and others about the dangers of fireworks."

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission offers several tips.

- Never allow children to play with or ignite fireworks.
- Read and follow all warnings and instructions.
- Be sure other people are at a safe distance before lighting fireworks.
- Only light fireworks on a smooth, flat surface away from the house, dry leaves and flammable materials.
- Never try to relight fireworks that have not fully functioned.
- Keep a bucket of water in case of a malfunction or fire.

www.cpsc.gov/kids/kidsafety/kiddfwks.html

American Legion

Resolution No. 33:

Resolved, that The American Legion urges all departments and posts to assist in alerting, informing, and educating parents, children, community leaders, and others about the dangers of fireworks; and

Resolved, that departments and posts encourage children and their families to enjoy fireworks at public fireworks displays conducted by professionals, rather than purchase fireworks for home or private use.

[ECONOMICS]

United States of Generosity

Research conducted by Arthur Brooks of the American Enterprise Institute reveals that, per capita, Americans donate 3.5 times more to charity and charitable causes than do the French, seven times more than do Germans, and 14 times more than do Italians.

U.S. households with wealth exceeding \$1 million account for "about half of all charitable donations," but low-income families are the most generous group in the United States, "giving away about 4.5 percent of their income on average."

Brooks also reports that "religious people" are more likely to give their time and money than non-religious:

	Religious	Non-Religious
<i>Give money to any cause</i>	91 percent	66 percent
<i>Volunteer for any cause</i>	67 percent	44 percent
<i>Give money to nonreligious cause</i>	71 percent	61 percent
<i>Volunteer for a nonreligious cause</i>	60 percent	39 percent

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[PERSONAL COMPUTING]

Who's storing your words?

BY REID GOLDSBOROUGH

One of the oldest online maxims is: "You own your own words." If only it were that simple.

When you put up a Web site or blog or participate in Internet discussions, you may think that your words, whether they're hasty or wise, will gradually fade away over time. But Internet archive systems exist to preserve them long-term.

The best-known Web archive service is the Wayback Machine, part of a larger effort called the Internet Archive. If you've put up a Web site or blog then later had second thoughts and taken it down, chances are it's still preserved through the Wayback Machine.

This free service has been taking snapshots of the Web at various points in time since 1996, with an astonishing 85 billion pages currently archived.

Archiving is all about redundancy. The content of the Wayback Machine is mirrored, appropriately enough, at the New Library of Alexandria in Egypt. The original Library of Alexandria, founded by the Greek rulers of Egypt around 300 B.C., was designed to be the repository of all the world's knowledge.

If you don't want your words preserved for posterity, the Wayback Machine lets you opt out. The service offers detailed directions how to remove previous versions and prevent future ones.

Another well-known archive service is Google Groups, previously called Deja News and before that, DejaViews. Google Groups is a Web interface to Usenet, the worldwide system of hundreds of thousands of online discussion groups. People can participate in these discussions through the Web, through their e-mail program, or through a specialized Usenet program.

The Google Groups Web site is most useful in letting you search for and join specific discussion groups as well as search for current and old posts, with archives of posts going back to 1981. Google Groups provides means to remove your previous posts from its archive and to

prevent future post archiving, but as with the Wayback Machine, you have to take matters into your own hands.

To remove your posts from the Google Groups archive, you have to create a free account. It's best to do so using the same e-mail address you used for the posts you want deleted. You can have it delete posts made with an old e-mail address you know longer have, but that's more cumbersome.

Your words may also be archived at Web-site discussion groups and Yahoo Groups e-mail discussion groups. Some Web-site discussion groups let you remove your posts yourself. But you may need to ask the webmaster.

There are numerous other Web sites that crawl the Web, Usenet, Yahoo Groups, and similar places and create archives themselves. You can find some of them through a relevant Google search, typing in as key words any distinctive phrases you remember from any posts you've made. Some of these sites, however, are pay services, and their archives won't be accessible to Google. So there's no way to ensure that your words are completely within your control.

Perhaps the best strategy, if you don't want your words to come back to haunt you, is remember your mother's words: "Think before you speak."

Another option is to use a pseudonym. The flip side of Internet archive services is their usefulness in helping you find what might be lost.

Reid Goldsborough is a syndicated columnist and author of the book "Straight Talk About the Information Superhighway." reidgold@comcast.net, www.reidgoldsborough.com



QUICK LINKS

Internet Archive
www.archive.org

Wayback Machine
www.archive.org/web/web.php

Google Groups
groups.google.com

[LEGIONNAIRES IN ACTION]

POST 78, HYDE PARK, MASS.: Since 2004, the post has been sending comfort items to U.S. troops overseas. In March, the mission grew bigger: adopting the Massachusetts National Guard's Headquarters and Headquarters Battery 1st Battalion, 101st Field Artillery Regiment, which deployed to Iraq on Sept. 6, 2006, and spent 13 months protecting the U.S. ambassador to Iraq and other VIPs. Spc. Joe Reen, a Post 78 member and family friend of Commander John Moran, e-mailed back and forth about the regiment's needs. Legion family cookouts, raffles and other fundraisers brought in more than \$7,500. The funds helped purchase and send to the troops toiletries, DVDs, snacks and suntan lotion, along with a shipment of T-shirts depicting different areas of Massachusetts.

DEPARTMENT OF COLORADO: Past National Commander Tom Bock and other Colorado Legionnaires have partnered with sponsors to create

Connecting Military Families, a nonprofit organization that provides free Web sites to deployed U.S. servicemembers and their families. "We're concerned about these families being separated for so long, and we wanted to make an effort to help them keep in touch," Bock said.

Families can post photo albums, maintain kids' pages, write family blogs, post the latest news from home, send and receive e-mail, and more.

Donations of \$175 cover the cost of connecting a family for a year. www.connectingmilitaryfamilies.net

POST 439, EDINBORO, PA.: Two years ago, Edinboro's community swimming pool was on the verge of closing. Thanks to Post 439 – just six years old and with fewer than 80 members – that didn't happen. State Rep. John Evans secured a \$250,000 Department of

Conservation and Natural Resources grant to keep the pool going, but he needed someone to step in and take control.

He reached out to Legionnaire Harry Glunt, a retired contractor. After about \$60,000 in repairs were made, Legionnaires, their wives and community members began volunteering at the pool; the only paid positions are high-school and college students who work as lifeguards. Glunt became a certified pool operator so he could mix the chemicals without hiring someone else.

Renamed the Veterans of Post 439 American Legion Community Pool, the facility reopened and has two straight financially successful seasons. "Because

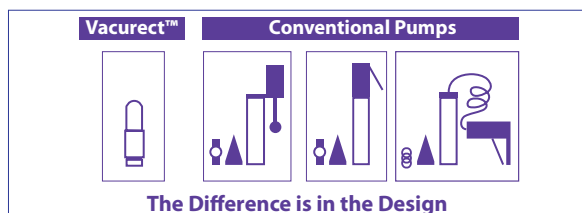
of all the volunteer help, our second year operating the pool was the first time in 20 years it had paid for itself," Glunt said.



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[MEDIA]

SHOWDOWN AIR COMBAT

Military Channel launches series on historic aerial dogfight

Q: How did you, an Air Force fighter pilot, land a television role like this?

A: The folks at Travelling Light and the Military Channel were looking for a host who could lend credibility to the series. They were intent on achieving historical accuracy to the degree that they found actual vintage aircraft and talked to experts and pilots about the dogfights they wanted to re-create. They wanted an active-duty Air Force pilot. The producer of the series, Adam Friedman, heard about me through a mutual friend, and he met me at an air show in California.

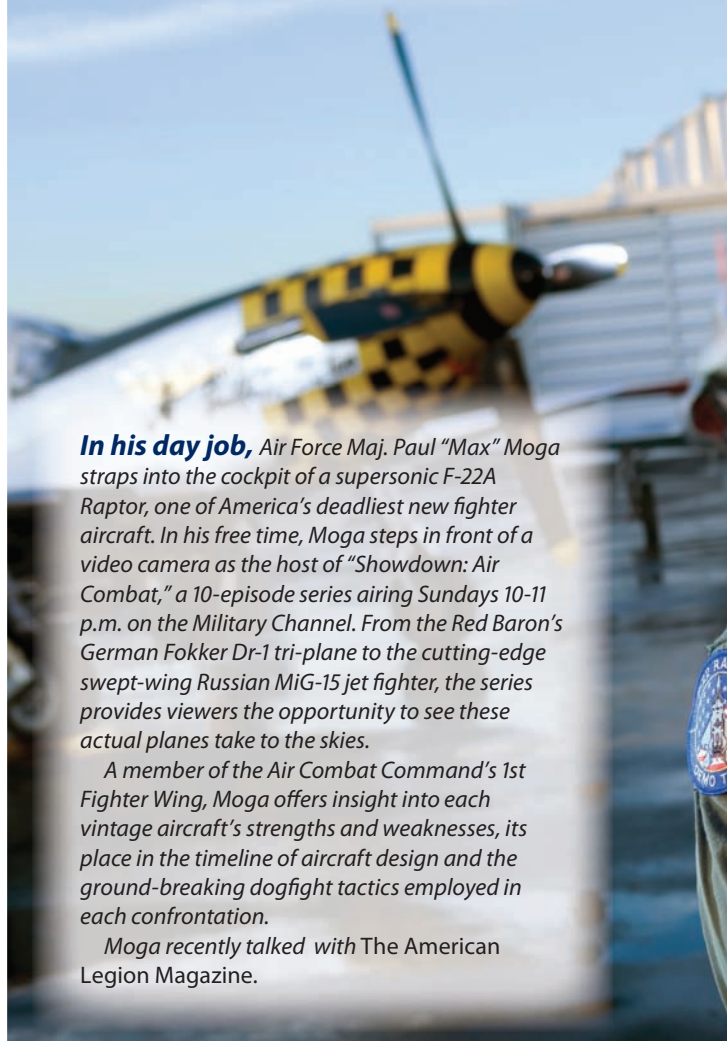
Q: What persuaded you to take the part?

A: A significant part of my job right now is outreach. I try to get the message out to as many people as possible about the Air Force. It took some time for the proposal to wend its way through the Air Force leadership, but ultimately it was recognized as a great opportunity for us to tell the Air Force story. The Military Channel adds credibility to its production. The Air Force gets access to a huge audience. And the public has the opportunity to witness accurate re-creations.

It is absolutely crucial to start grooming the next generation. I'm convinced that the best Raptor pilot the world is ever going to see is sitting out there in his or her fourth grade wondering what they want to do with their lives. I hope "Showdown: Air Combat" will spark an interest.

Q: How do today's air-combat tactics differ than those of previous wars?

A: Tactics have evolved with capabilities. Technol-



In his day job, Air Force Maj. Paul "Max" Moga straps into the cockpit of a supersonic F-22A Raptor, one of America's deadliest new fighter aircraft. In his free time, Moga steps in front of a video camera as the host of "Showdown: Air Combat," a 10-episode series airing Sundays 10-11 p.m. on the Military Channel. From the Red Baron's German Fokker Dr-1 tri-plane to the cutting-edge swept-wing Russian MiG-15 jet fighter, the series provides viewers the opportunity to see these actual planes take to the skies.

A member of the Air Combat Command's 1st Fighter Wing, Moga offers insight into each vintage aircraft's strengths and weaknesses, its place in the timeline of aircraft design and the ground-breaking dogfight tactics employed in each confrontation.

Moga recently talked with The American Legion Magazine.

ogy advances have driven tactics. World War II and Korean War air-to-air fighting was a very close-in, phone-booth type activity. Combatants were getting up close and personal. When friend and foe saw each other, they knew one of them was not going home. In Vietnam, close-in combat ultimately gave way to the air-to-air missile age. Today's technology offers pilots an opportunity to set up a hundred miles away and work their way in, hopefully making a kill without ever having visual contact.

Q: How do today's fighter pilots differ from their predecessors?

A: Technology and tactics have certainly evolved, but the warrior ethos has not changed. That's

HIGHLIGHTS FROM SEASON ONE/SHOWDOWN: AIR COMBAT All episodes 10-11 p.m. ET

F-86 SABRE vs. MIG-15

May 20, 1951, dogfight won by Air Force Capt. James Jabara

P-38 LIGHTNING vs. ZERO

Rookie pilot Richard Ira Bong takes on his first Zero

F4U CORSAIR vs. ZERO

Gregory "Pappy" Boyington tangles with Zeros, 1944

ZERO vs. F4F WILDCAT

James "Pug" Southerland defeats Japan's Saburo Sakai

F4F WILDCAT vs. ZERO

Naval aviator John Thach devises the "Thach Weave"

P-51 MUSTANG vs. ME-109

Bud Anderson's P-51 Mustang fights Messerschmitt Me-109s



The Military Channel

something the Air Force has made a very conscious effort to preserve throughout our history. It doesn't matter if you are flying an F-22 or you're back flying a P-51, the one thing that, cannot change is the fighter pilot warrior mentality. The Air Force is very aware of that and we start grooming the young ones at an early stage.

Q: What is "Showdown" really about?

A: The show is a really great way to pay honor and tribute to folks that are responsible for the country that we live in today. The guys featured in the episodes defied the odds and rose to meet life and death challenges time and time again. They are all true heroes.

– James V. Carroll

SPAD vs. ALBATROSS

June 1917 battle pits Georges Guynemer against Ernst Udet

P-47 THUNDERBOLT vs. FW-190

Pilot Don Gentile's dogfight inspires a popular song

SOPWITH CAMEL vs. FOKKER DR-1

The dogfight that ended the career of the Red Baron

[CAREERS]

Where to find the action

One of the most important considerations when planning your job search is to know where the hiring action is – what industries and professions are hottest and projected to offer the most



THE JOB FRONT
BY WENDY S. ENELOW

opportunities over the next decade. Here's what you need to know, as reported by the U.S. Department of Labor, for the years 2006 through 2016.

■ The top 10 occupations with the largest projected employment growth are, from No. 1 to No. 10: network systems and data communications; personal and home care ; home health care; computer software engineering; medical assistance; computer systems analysis; food preparation and service; registered nurse; postsecondary education; and management analysis.

■ The 10 industries with the largest wage and salary growth are, No. 1 to No. 10: management, scientific, and technical consulting; employment services; general medical and surgical hospitals; elementary and secondary schools; local government (excluding education and hospitals); physician offices; limited-service eating establishments; colleges, universities and professional schools; computer-systems design; and home health-care services.

■ Service-providing industries are expected to account for more than 75 percent of all jobs by 2016.

■ Professional and business services, along with health care and social services, will add more than 8.1 million jobs – more than half of the total projected increase in employment.

■ Engineering professions are increasing by double digits with the following projections for growth: software engineering (44.6 percent), environmental engineering (25.4 percent), industrial engineering (20.3 percent), and aerospace engineering (10.2 percent).

■ Management, business and financial occupations are projected to grow 10.4 percent.

■ Within goods-producing industries, construction is the only sector projected to grow. Manufacturing will decline by 1.5 million jobs.

■ Office and administrative-support occupations are projected to grow more slowly, reflecting the need for fewer personnel as a result of the gains in office automation and technology.

Wendy Enelow is the co-author of "Expert Résumés for Military-to-Civilian Transitions" and "Executive Résumé Toolkit."

www.wendyenelow.com

[90TH NATIONAL CONVENTION]

PHOENIX: WHERE 90 IS COOL

Thousands of veterans and their families will pour into Phoenix Aug. 22-28 for the 90th American Legion National Convention. They will hear from national leaders, attend competitions, enjoy entertainment, meet in committees and pass resolutions. But they won't have to parade in the Arizona heat.

In lieu of a traditional street parade, a special indoor event is scheduled, this year only. "The American Legion Family Presents a Tribute to Service" will take place inside U.S. Airways Center from 4 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. on Aug. 24. The tribute will include a climate-controlled parade of Legion family leaders not to exceed 18 representatives from each department. Also featured will be a mass enlistment/re-enlistment ceremony coordinated by the Department of Arizona in concert with the Arizona National Guard and local recruiters in the Phoenix area; Casino Arizona will perform "The Temptations Review"; country star Michael Peterson gives a concert; and a fireworks display closes it out.

For Legionnaires who are between meetings or want to take a break from the convention, Phoenix has much to offer. Information is available online.

www.visitphoenix.com

Downtown

Day or night, Copper Square in the heart of downtown is alive with art, history, food, drink, shopping and southwestern culture.

Desert trails

Three major mountains surround Phoenix, the Sonoran Desert is one of the most ecologically diverse deserts in the world, and seven large lakes are within a short drive.

Golf courses

Phoenix and neighboring communities are home to more than 200 spectacular golf courses. Whether you want to enjoy a laid-back round at a municipal facility or test your skills on a championship layout, you'll find a course that matches your style and budget.

Diamondbacks welcome Legionnaires

Aug. 22 is American Legion Family Night at Chase Field for a Major League Baseball game between the Arizona Diamondbacks and the Florida Marlins. **Order tickets by Aug. 8.** For each ticket sale, the Diamondbacks will donate \$2 to Legion Baseball.

www.legion.org/documents/legion/pdf/conventionbaseballnight_08.pdf

LIVING WELL

VITAMINS



BY DR. JOEL KUPERSMITH

Joel Kupersmith, M.D., is chief research and development officer for the Veterans Health Administration.

This article is designed to provide general information. It is not intended to be, nor is it, medical advice. Readers should consult their physicians when they have health problems.

True or false? *A healthy, well-rounded diet should give your body all the nutrition it needs.*

Ask 10 reputable health experts, and you can get 10 different opinions. On one end are those who recommend you stock your kitchen cabinets with everything from A to zinc and swallow a handful of pills with every meal. At the other end are those who claim there's a lot of hype when it comes to supplements and that you should save your money and just eat right.

The middle-of-the-road advice offered by many physicians – and endorsed by many mainstream health organizations – is to simply take a good-quality multivitamin every day. Another reasonable approach is to tailor the regimen based on gender, age and health status. For example, an athletic 25-year-old male may be fine without extra nutrients, but a 50-year-old woman who scores low on a bone-density test and is at risk for osteoporosis may be advised to take calcium and vitamin D supplements. In fact, the Institute of Medicine recommends that all older adults consider taking supplemental calcium and vitamins B12 and D.

Knowing where to strike the balance can be difficult. While there's plenty of good

Pre-arranged Legion tours

Pre-arranged activities are available for Legion family members through We Are Arizona, Inc. Tours include roundtrip transportation, professional guides, equipment, bottled water on most tours, permits, taxes and gratuities. Tours depart between 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. daily from the Phoenix Convention Center. Comfortable walking shoes, sunscreen and sunglasses are recommended for all tours.

www.weareaz.com (888) 449-2388

■ Half-day shopping

Downtown Scottsdale, Scottsdale Fashion Square Mall, Southbridge, Desert Ridge Marketplace, Arizona Mills **\$28 per person**

■ Casino Arizona

Guests will find 1,500 ticket-pay multi-denominational slot machines, including 80 high-limit slots, live blackjack, 50 poker tables, and a sports bar. **\$40 per person**

■ Arizona Wing of the Commemorative Air Force Museum

Exhibits range from "Home Front" to "Front Lines." (Not available Aug. 25.) **\$45 per person**

■ Bass fishing

Arizona is a top destination for largemouth,

white and striped bass fishing. A day of casual fishing or biggest-fish competition are both available. **\$170 per person**

■ Valley of the Sun City

See remarkable homes owned by wealthy and famous residents, learn the history of Wrigley Mansion, see Chase Field Ballpark, the US Airways Arena, and Historic Heritage Square. **\$55 per person**

■ Heard Museum

The internationally acclaimed Heard Museum is a great way to learn about the cultures and art of Southwestern American Indians. **\$55 per person**

■ 'Duck' tour

Hop aboard a World War II "duck" for an off-road tour of the Sonoran Desert. The tour continues as the "duck" drives right into Lake Pleasant and turns into a boat. **\$65 per person**

■ Frank Lloyd Wright Taliesin West

\$70 per person

■ Carefree/Cave Creek tour and lunch

\$75 per person

■ Scottsdale Gallery tour

\$100 per person

■ Full-day Sedona tour

\$65 per person



information on the Web from trusted organizations, such as the National Institutes of Health, researching this topic on your own and deciding on the best course of action can be daunting.

For one thing, vitamins are overseen by the Food and Drug Administration as food, not drugs. Therefore, they are not required to be tested in rigorous clinical trials before they can be sold, and there are no uniform clinical guidelines for their use. A company can claim that its vitamin C is "quickly absorbed" and "gentle on the digestive system," but these types of statements are not evaluated by the FDA. Moreover, there's often no way to be sure that the product actually contains what it says on the label.

Processed foods are often fortified with vitamins and minerals, so people who also take supplements may be getting more than they need of some nutrients. This is unlikely to be harmful in most cases, but there are exceptions. Taking large doses of vitamin E when on blood-thinning medication can raise the risk of bleeding.

The debate over vitamins is further fueled by

the conflicting results of research studies. You may recall the news headlines last year when a study in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* came to the surprising conclusion that taking antioxidants – such as vitamin C or beta carotene – actually increases a person's risk of dying by up to 16 percent. This contradicted many earlier studies that seemed to show a wealth of benefits for antioxidants. Many experts challenged the 2007 finding, but it's easy to see how the average consumer can be confused.

Many experts are awaiting the results of a large trial being conducted by VA and the National Institutes of Health to determine if selenium and vitamin E can ward off prostate cancer. The study includes more than 35,000 healthy men.

Another important study is the Physicians' Health Study II, which includes more than 15,000 older male doctors. Co-led by Dr. J. Michael Gaziano of the Boston VA and Brigham and Women's Hospital, it is testing vitamin C, vitamin E, beta-carotene, and a multivitamin for the prevention of cardiovascular disease, cancer and other health conditions.

How to submit a reunion

The American Legion Magazine publishes reunion notices for veterans. Send notices to **The American Legion Magazine**, Attn: Reunions, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206, fax (317) 630-1280, e-mail reunions@legion.org or submit information via our Web site, www.legion.org/veterans/reunions.

Include the branch of service and complete name of the group, no abbreviations, with your request. The listing also should include the reunion dates and city, along with a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address. Listings are publicized free of charge.

Your notice will appear on our Web site within a week and will remain available online until the final day of your reunion. Upon submission, please allow three months for your reunion to be published in print. **Due to the large number of reunions, The American Legion Magazine**

will publish a group's listing only once a year. Notices should be sent at least six months prior to the reunion to ensure timely publication.

Other notices

"In Search Of" is a means of getting in touch with people from your unit to plan a reunion. **We do not publish listings that seek people for interviews, research purposes, military photos or help in filing a VA claim.** Listings must include the name of the unit from which you seek people, the time period and the location, as well as a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address. Send notices to **The American Legion Magazine**, Attn: "In Search Of," P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206, fax (317) 630-1280 or e-mail reunions@legion.org.

The magazine will not publish names of individuals, only the name of the unit. Listings are published free of charge.

Life Membership notices are published for Legionnaires who have been awarded life mem-

berships by their posts. **This does not include a member's own Paid-Up-For-Life membership.** Notices must be submitted on official forms, which may be obtained by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to **The American Legion Magazine**, Attn: Life Memberships, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206.

"Comrades in Distress" listings must be approved by the Legion's Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation division. If you are seeking to verify an injury received during service, contact your Legion department service officer for information on how to publish a notice.

To respond to a "Comrades in Distress" listing, send a letter to **The American Legion Magazine**, Attn: Comrades in Distress, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206. Include the listing's CID number in your response.

"Taps" notices are published only for Legionnaires who served as department commanders or national officers.

AIR FORCE/ARMY AIR FORCES

1st Radio Sqdn Mobile/AF Sec Serv, San Antonio, 9/7-10, Phil Perry, (717) 545-0974, pandhperry@aol.com; **12th Bomb Grp 12th TFW 12th FFW**, Denver, 9/18-22, Mary Bushnell, (651) 739-0051, mhbushnell@aol.com; **20th Special Opns Sqdn (Deactivation)**, Hurlburt Field, FL, 10/16-18, Robert Hall, (618) 541-8082, robert.hall@scott.af.mil; **20th Special Opns Sqdn (Vietnam)**, Kokomo, IN, 9/12-14, Robert Hall, (618) 541-8082, robert.hall@scott.af.mil; **40th Bomb Grp (VH) B-29 (WWII)**, St. Louis, 10/16-20, Jean Suitt, (800) 959-2582, jsuitt@crecent.com; **40th Cbt Wing 1st Air Div 8th AF (1942-1945)**, Bedford, England, 5/20-31, Ian D. White, (779) 659-3421, iw.305cando@goolemail.com; **62nd & 87th FIS (1959-1985)**, Sawyer AFB, MI, 12/7, Lani Duquette, (906) 475-7179, nolan359@charter.net; **75th Air Depot Wing (Kelly AFB, Korea, Japan & Europe, 1952-1955)**, Charleston, SC, 9/25-28, Walt Walko, (719) 499-1106, wawlaw2@juno.com; **79th Ftr Bomb Sqdn (Woodbridge, England, 1950-1954)**, Nashville, TN, 9/25-27, Ray C. Gautreaux, (225) 357-8198, rayg173@etigers.net; **99th Bomb Grp (WWII)**, Fairborn, OH, 10/9-12, David Hill, dohill@att.net; **401st Bomb Grp (WWII)**, Washington, 10/9-13, George Menzel, (912) 598-0276, ghmsec@comcast.net; **433rd Trp Carrier Grp (WWII)**, Nashville, TN, 9/3-7, Carmen Kight, (863) 644-3104; **464th Bomb Grp (WWII)**, Tucson, AZ, 11/25-29, Art Rawlings, (615) 876-2132, eliseandart@comcast.net

464th Bomb Grp 15th AF (WWII), Tucson, AZ, 9/25-29, George Krynovich, (303) 366-0649, gkrynovi@aol.com; **506th SAC/TFW**, Dayton, OH, 10/15-19, Bill Henderson, (405) 359-8558, airpirate5054@optonline.net; **526th Ftr Sqdn**, Nashville, TN, 10/17-19, Wayne Rebischke, (763) 682-2685, waynerrebischke@gmail.com; **601st Tact Control Assn**, Dayton, OH, 9/16-21, Hap Haggard, (520) 298-8208, haphagg@aol.com; **768th AC&W (Moriarty, New Mexico)**, Branson, MO, 10/16-18, Jose Perea, (303) 433-7551, moriartyreunion@msn.com; **820th Opns Sqdn (1955-1959)**, Plattsburgh, NY, 9/26-27, Herbert L. Andrew, (410) 822-4792, dhandrew@verizon.net; **AACS Alumni (Comms & ATC)**, Branson, MO, 9/24-28, Walt McLain, (866) 299-1045, aacsmbmrship@comcast.net; **B-66 Destroyer Assn**, Colorado Springs, CO, 9/4-7, Heather Smalley, (800) 981-4012, jimmilam@aol.com; **Carlsbad Army AB**, Carlsbad, NM, 9/12-13, Kenny Power, (575) 302-6619, kenny@blankpageproductions.com; **Trp Carrier/Tact Airlift Assn**, San Antonio, 11/6-9, Hector Leyva, (210) 767-8160, hector145@msn.com; **Westover AFB Special Projects Production Facility (AFSPFF) 8th Recon Tech Sqdn, 497th Recon Tech Grp, 6594th Test Sqdn, 7405th Support Grp & 7499th Support Grp**, Nashville, TN, 10/2-6, Dick Temple, (202) 385-4611, dicktemple4951@hotmail.com; **Yokota AFB (Japan)**, Atlanta, GA, 8/7-9, Sam Donnelly, (252) 946-1560, donnelly8hds@gmail.com

ARMY

1st FA Obsn Bn/1st Bn 25th Arty (WWII & Korea), Fort Mitchell, KY, 10/9-12, Ralph F. Mueller, (724) 348-5359, lctrjmc@verizon.net; **2nd Bn 174th Air Def Arty (ADA)**, McConnelville, OH, 9/21, Tony Six, (740) 767-2441, tonysix@embarqmail.com; **2nd Bn, 70th Armd, 1st Armd Div (Desert Storm)**, Fort Hood, TX, 7/25-27, Steve Fixler, (630) 589-6024, sfixler@hotmail.com; **3rd Armd Div (All Eras)**, Austin, TX, 7/23-26, Dan O'Leary, (732) 816-6149, vicepresident@3ad.org; **4th Bn 9th Inf Rgt 25th Inf Div**, San Antonio, 9/18-20, Larry James, (239) 353-3206, ljam@manchu.org; **13th Armd Div (WWII)**, Kansas City, MO, 10/15-19, Jo Ellen Bender, (630) 355-5332, jebender1520@aol.com; **13th Eng Cbt Bn**, Colorado Springs, CO, 10/2-4, William F. Gavito, (303) 697-9530, pattygavito@aol.com; **26th Inf "Blue Spader,"** Loveland, CO, 10/2-5, Don Weinmeister, (970) 484-2643, dandrweim@msn.com

27th FA Rgt Assn All Bns, West Point, NY, 9/5-7, James R. Suesmann, (973) 742-3474, jrs.cpa@verizon.net; **28th Inf Div (All Eras)**, Fort Indiantown Gap, PA, 9/4-7, Walter Chmiola, (717) 787-9385; **33rd Inf Div**, Springfield, IL, 9/11-13, Rosemary Chamberlin, (269) 344-3483, chambie123@yahoo.com; **38th Sig Bn (WWII & 1981-1988)**, Eatontown, NJ, 9/19-21, Bill Forlos, (803) 776-1114; **44th Inf Div Illinois Nat'l Guard (1946-1954 & WWII)**, Springfield, IL, 10/9-11, Howard M. Ferrilli, (817) 579-1608, herrilli44@charter.net; **70th AAA Gun Bn**, Deadwood, SD, 9/14-17, Jim Harden, (941) 377-5295, cribbagebd2@webtv.net; **79th Eng Const Bn**, St. Louis, 10/8-11, Bobby Thompson, (304) 776-2629, bobbyb301t@aol.com; **80th Inf "Blue Ridge" Div Vets Assn**, Carlisle, PA, 8/13-16, Eugene O'Neil, (301) 627-1793, eo1793@aol.com; **80th Trans Det (Cargo Heli Field Maint) & 93rd Trans Co (Light Heli)**, Rapid City, SD, 9/16-18, Gordon Askew, (701) 265-4359, gaskew@polarcomm.com; **100th Inf Div Assn (WWII)**, Raleigh, NC, 9/17-20, Roland Giduz, (919) 942-2194, rgiduz@nc.rr.com; **164th Cbt Eng**, Harrisburg, PA, 10/5-8, Glade Wittwer, (703) 780-4473, plwgs@yaho.com; **273rd FA Bn**, Springfield, MO, 8/15-17, Loretta Hutchison, (573) 796-2653; **300th AFA Bn (Korea)**, Cody, WY, 9/4-7, Don Crawford, (309) 456-3992, doncrawford@winco.net; **532nd EBSR**, Vancouver, WA, 9/10-13, Lyle Bose, (360) 256-1653; **568th Ord HM (Korea)**, Knoxville, TN, 9/25-27, Don Flynn, (314) 481-1046, donflynn@att.net; **614th AVEL (DS) (Nha Trang, Vietnam, 1966-1972)**, Nashville, TN, 11/7-9, Del Belanger, (972) 985-0002, ch-47hooker@verizon.net; **709th Maint Bn & 99th CS Bn, 9th Inf Div**, Phoenix, MD, 9/17-20, Dean Ayres, (410) 527-1204, deanayres@comcast.net; **709th Tank Bn**, Gettysburg, PA, 9/24-28, Bruce Keeler, (610) 282-1865, bdkeeler@earthlink.net; **753rd AAA Gun Bn**, Hummelstown, PA, 9/22-24, Bob Warren, (717) 737-7198, bbwarren@paonline.com; **796th MP Bn (Vienna, Italy)**, Savannah, GA,

9/15-18, Robert Reiski, (638) 391-1955, b_reiski@msn.com; **801st Eng Avn Bn (SCARWAF)**, Dayton, OH, 9/25-27, Bill Dowd, (563) 569-8291; **A Co 982nd Eng Const Bn (Korea)**, Myrtle Beach, SC, 10/16-19, Jim Elvington, (864) 232-1452; **Americal Div Vets Assn/Eastern Regional Chpt**, Fort Thomas, KY, 10/23-25, Mark Deam, (937) 492-1908, mdeam@woh.rr.com; **ASA (Korea)**, Concord, NC, Don Adair, (704) 399-2200, donadair@bellsouth.net; **B Co 503rd MP Bn Patton's 3rd Army (1943-1945)**, Mystic, CT, 9/21-24, Peter P. Joseph, (207) 872-2225; **Battle of the Bulge Vets**, Columbus, OH, 9/9-14, Ramada Plaza, (614) 846-0300, edlambert@mail.com; **Bravo Co 4th Bn 31st Inf Rgt 196th LIB Americal Div (Vietnam)**, Nashville, TN, 10/16-19, Bill Krysenki, (732) 567-0538, hawkiivirk@aol.com; **C Co 89th Tank Bn (Korea)**, Rapid City, SD, 10/2-6, Richard Vesely, (218) 243-2005, vesfam@hotmail.com; **D Co 2nd Battle Grp 38th Inf 3rd Inf Div**, Pigeon Forge, TN, 8/25-28, Max McGough, (901) 372-6542, mcgough40@comcast.net; **L Co Mil Retirees Club, 35th Inf Rgt 25th Inf Div (All Eras)**, Rapid City, SD, 9/17-20, Ranol N. Hemingway Jr., (866) 822-6989, zoonet@nuno.com; **Warrant Officers Assn**, Aberdeen, MD, 10/20-24, Herbert Rundgren, (800) 587-2962, usawoahq@verizon.net

COAST GUARD

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48th TFW (RAF Lakenheath, UK, Opn Eldorado Canyon, April 1986), John Tomkins, (712) 298-0650, pm50536@yahoo.com
86th Maint Bn (Qui Nhon, Vietnam, 1966), Bruce L. Magnuson, (520) 204-0517, blmag@cox.net
127th Postal (Furth, Germany, 1971-1974), Jack Vrocher, (270) 670-7637, jvrocher@mcchi.com
167th HQ & HQ Co (Camp Tortuguero, Puerto Rico), Mickey Cafaratti, (409) 866-8049
436th MAC Aerial Port & CSA range rider personnel (Opn Nickel Grass, Oct-Nov 1973), Charles D. Sutter, (423) 282-0489, jdsut@comcast.net
483rd Trp Carrier Base Softball Team (Ashia AFB, Japan, 1952-1953), Jack Cooper, (573) 221-4231, j93j4cooper2@socket.net
523rd Sig Bn A Co (Chu Lai, Vietnam, 1967-1968), Dave Rose, (740) 483-1150, jcrose@1973@earthlink.net
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COMRADES IN DISTRESS

3rd Plt 578th Sig Co (CC) (Cam Rahn Bay, Vietnam, 1966). Robert William Lemont seeks witnesses to verify back injuries as a result of a fall from a telephone pole.

TAPS

Hon. Judge James P. Dean, Dept. of Mississippi. Nat'l Mbrshp. & Post Activ. Cmte. Memb. 1968-1969, Nat'l Americanism Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1970-1972, Dept. Cmdr. 1972-1973, Nat'l Internal Affairs Cmsn. Memb. 1973-1988, Nat'l Internal Affairs Cmsn. Vice Chmn. 1974-1976, Nat'l Internal Affairs Cmsn. Chmn. 1976-1984, Nat'l Legis. Cncl. Memb. 1983-1984 and 1987-1990, Nat'l Cmdr. 1986-1987, Nat'l Veterans Planning & Coordination

Cmte. Memb. 1986-1987, Nat'l Overseas Graves Decoration Trust Chmn. 1986-1987, Nat'l Overseas Graves Decoration Trust Memb. 1986-1989, Nat'l Advisory Cmte. to the Nat'l Cmdr. Chmn. 1987-1988, Nat'l Policy Coordination & Action Grp. Vice Chmn. 1987-1988, Nat'l Overseas Graves Decoration Trust Vice Chmn. 1988-1989, Nat'l Advisory Cmte. to the Nat'l Cmdr. Vice Chmn. 1988-1989, Nat'l Policy Coordination & Action Grp. Consultant 1988-1989, Nat'l Endowment Fund Corporation Memb. 1993-2008 and Nat'l Endowment Fund Director 1997-2008.

Gard W. Enman, Dept. of Maine. Dept. Cmdr. 1990-1991, Nat'l Exec. Cmte. Alt. 1992-1995, Nat'l Distinguished Guests Cmte. Vice Chmn. 1986-1987, Nat'l Exec. Cmte. Memb. 1995-1998, Nat'l Foreign Relations Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1992-1995, Nat'l & Homeland Sec. Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1988-1991, Nat'l Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Cmsn. Memb. 1999-2008 and Nat'l Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Liaison Cmte. Memb. 1995-1998.

James E. Myers, Dept. of Ohio. Nat'l Mbrshp. & Post Activ. Cmte. Memb. 1979-1980, Nat'l & Homeland Sec. Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1986-1989, Nat'l Distinguished Guests Cmte. Vice Chmn. 1990-1992, Dept. Cmdr. 1994-1995, Nat'l Legis. Cncl. Memb. 1993-1994, 1999-2000 & 2001-2008, Nat'l Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Cmsn. Memb. 2002-2008 and Nat'l Veterans Preference Cmsn. Memb. 1995-2002.

Richard "Dick" C. Pfaffinger, Dept. of Minnesota. Nat'l Foreign Relations Cmsn. Memb. 1982-2001 and Nat'l Foreign Relations Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1978-1982 and 2001-2002.

Peter G. Randall, Dept. of Maryland. Nat'l Foreign Relations Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1982-2001.

Daniel I. Ross Jr., Dept. of South Carolina. Nat'l Law & Order Cmte. Memb. 1961-1962, Nat'l Mbrshp. & Post Activ. Cmte. Memb. 1962-1966, Nat'l Rehabilitation Cmte. Advisory Board Memb. 1962-1963 and Dept. Cmdr. 1966-1967.



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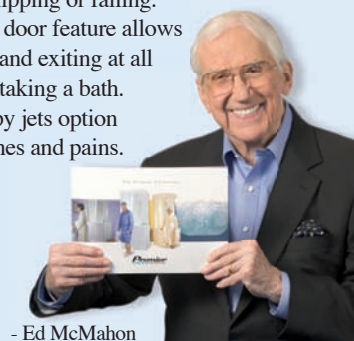
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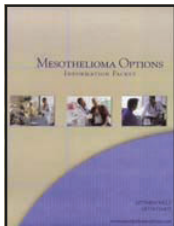

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The father replied, "I have a system. No one goes to the bathroom until the camp is set up."

MOM AND DAD tried to console their young son, but the boy would have none of it. "You know, Jeffrey," his father said, "it's not your fault the dog died. He's probably up in heaven right now with God."

Jeffrey retorted, "What would God want with a dead dog?"

THE BUSINESSMAN dragged himself home and barely made it to his chair before he dropped down, exhausted.

His sympathetic wife was right there with a cool drink and a comforting word. "My, you look tired," she said. "You must have had a hard day today. What happened to make you so exhausted?"

"It was terrible," her husband said. "The computer broke down, and we had to do our own thinking."



"You look like a lady with a story to tell."

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"NOW, THEY LOOK like a happily married couple," the husband remarked.

"Don't be too sure, dear," his wife replied. "They're probably saying the same thing about us."

A YOUNG BOY arrived home from his first day at school. "Nothing exciting happened," he told his mother, "except the teacher didn't know how to spell 'cat,' so I told her."

"BOY, IT IS HARD to keep up with all these crises we have in America. Remember last week, when everybody in America was obese? Remember that? This week there's a food shortage. What happened over the weekend? Did we pig out and eat all the food?" – Jay Leno



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